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THE TIMES

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TODAY

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Erykah Badu
MAGAZINE

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Prison service considers turning military bases into jails

Tilt: reviewing sites

By Richard Ford
Home Correspondent

SIX SITES owned by the Ministry of Defence are being considered for conversion into emergency accommodation to cater for the rising prison population, which is threatening to engulf jails in England and Wales.

The bases, either disused or about to be closed by the Ministry, have been identified as having the potential to be speedily turned into jails holding low risk offenders.

Richard Tilt, Director-General of the Prison Service, disclosed yesterday that the service was reconsidering former military bases for housing criminals as the prison population reached a record 62,067.

The latest figure is only 561 short of the absolute capacity of the 135 jails in England and Wales. With the population rising by 300 a week, prisons will be full before the end of the month and the service would be forced into putting offenders into police cells at a cost of up to £2,000 a week for each prisoner.

Mr Tilt told *The Times*: "We are looking again at Ministry of Defence sites to see whether there are any that are suitable. They are our preferred option." He would not disclose the sites under consideration although most are in the north of England where population pressures are at their greatest.

It is thought the service wants two sites to hold about a total of 1,000 inmates and relieve population pressures which are restricting regimes in jails. But any proposal to convert a former military base would meet strong opposition from "not in my backyard" campaigners who delayed earlier proposals for emergency accommodation.

The service dropped plans to convert a former RAF base at Finningley near Doncaster in south Yorkshire at the end of last year after opposition from the local Labour-controlled council. It had wanted to take an 18-month lease on the base to house up to 300 low risk Category C prisoners.

Mr Tilt also said the Prison Service is to fight to overturn opposition to another of its proposals for emergency prison space. It is to appeal to the Department of the Environment to be allowed to convert a former Pontin's holiday camp, Middleton Towers, into a jail for 700 inmates.

Prisoners are also being affected by the population pressures with an estimated 10,800 doubled up in cells designed for one inmate and offenders being bused from the North to the South to make way for prisoners held in jail on remand.

Mr Tilt said the number of prisoners doubled up would reach 12,000 by November when the overall jail population is estimated to reach 64,000. However, the service is wary of relying on official estimates as the figures keep being overtaken by the numbers arriving in jail. In September 1996 it was estimated that the number in jail would reach 63,100 by March next year, a figure the service now expects will be reached within a matter of weeks.

Mark Healy, chairman of the Prison Officers Association, spoke of the dangers facing the system because of overcrowding. "The service has a responsibility for the safety of its staff and inmates and to continue in this vein means something is going to give."

He urged Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, to take emergency action and order the executive release of some prisoners, as occurred in the 1980s under the Conservative Government.

Loyalists condemn parades 'sell-out'

By Nicholas Watt, Chief Ireland Correspondent

MODERATE Orangemen faced a backlash from hardline Unionists yesterday after cancelling or redirecting four of today's July 12 parades.

Dissidents within the Orange Order condemned the gesture as a sell-out to the IRA, and urged Unionists to pull out of peace talks.

The Belfast County Grand Lodge, whose members signed up to the agreement on Thursday night, issued a statement yesterday "deploring the fact" that one of its lodges would not be marching today. It said: "We call on all Unionist politicians to unite and immediately withdraw from the 'talks process' until such times as our Government deals once and for all with Roman Catholic republicanism and the oppression of the British people of Ulster."

The Belfast Lodge did not criticise its district lodge in the Ballynafeigh area of south Belfast, which agreed not to march along the nationalist Lower Ormeau Road this morning. Instead, it blamed the Government for failing to provide "adequate security against the threat of pan-nationalist violence".

The furore erupted after four lodges agreed to restrict or abandon their parades. Marches along the Lower Ormeau Road and through Newry were cancelled, a parade through the centre of Londonderry parade was moved to Limavady, and the one in Armagh will avoid the Catholic Shambles area.

The decision came after Ronnie Flanagan, the RUC Chief Constable, told the Orangemen that there was a serious risk of terrorism if the marches went ahead, and that thousands of republicans would be bused into the four areas to oppose the parades.

The announcements were praised across the political spectrum yesterday, including a grudging word of welcome from Gerry Adams, the president of Sinn Fein, who said: "I acknowledge the significance of the decisions taken by the Orange Order which have created a breathing space."

The decisions also transformed relations between nationalists and Unionists. In Newtownbutler, Co Fermanagh, the two sides reached an agreement after months of deadlock over a parade through the village today.

While the security forces breathed a sigh of relief that serious violence would be averted, the Orange Order leadership was left grappling with an internal revolt. Joel Patton of the hardline Spirit of Drumcree group, led the criticism. He said: "The decision shows the complete incompetency and the cowardice of the leadership of the Orange Order. I believe that either these men are removed and replaced or the Orange Order itself will be destroyed."

He urged Orangemen to turn up at the site of the four marches today, saying: "Don't acquiesce in this. Make your feelings known because these people are betraying you."

The Rev Ian Paisley, the leader of the Democratic Unionists, condemned the Orange offer as a "declaration of surrender", but said that his party would leave the multi-party talks only if the Ulster Unionists did the same. David

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Angling kinship among the sexes — Nicola Church, England's leading woman fly-fisher, with Terry Hall, left, and Graham Thompson

Sex war in sport spreads to angling

By Michael Hornsby
Countryside Correspondent

WAR between the sexes has broken out in the world of fishing with a broadside from one of Britain's leading anglers, against the distracting and inhibiting presence of women on the riverbank.

Growing numbers of women are cramping the style of male anglers who no longer feel able to swear freely when they lose a fish or to answer calls of nature, he claims.

This *cri de coeur* comes in the same week that the *Coronation Street* actor, Johnny Briggs, outraged women golfers by calling them "cockroaches" who should be confined to all-female clubs.

In both cases the suggestion is that women do not understand, or are unwilling to adapt to, the culture of male-dominated sports and are spoiling the fun for the true participants. Des Taylor, who

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Blunkett puts student debts on sale to raise £3bn

By John O'Leary, Education Editor

DAVID BLUNKETT, the Education Secretary, launched the Labour Government's first privatisation yesterday with a surprise Bill designed to raise £3.1 billion from the sale of debt from student loans.

The scheme, first mooted by the Conservatives after plans for a wholesale privatisation of the Student Loans Company had foundered, had been halted by the election. But Mr Blunkett said the sale was a "critical element" in the maintenance of existing spending plans.

Officials insisted that there would be "no negative consequences" for borrowers. The terms of existing loans will be unchanged, but the Bill leaves open the possibility of the purchasers introducing new and more aggressive collection arrangements.

More than £2 billion of debt will be offered for sale, with another £1 billion expected to accumulate in the coming year. Twenty finance companies and banks have expressed interest. Experts were taken by surprise by the announcement, although receipts of £1.6 billion were included in the Budget. There had been no mention of a Bill in the Queen's Speech.

Ian Crawford, a member of a team of academics at the London School of Economics specialising in student loans, said the move amounted to a "fire sale" which would undervalue the debt. He had expected the Government to wait for this month's report on higher education by Sir Ron Dearing before taking decisions on student finance.

The previous government had intended to proceed with the sale using its original legislation. But Mr Blunkett said he had acted to "put on a clearer footing" his power to provide incentives and safeguard both taxpayers and the buyers. He expected the Bill to be non controversial.

Nicholas Barr, who led the LSE team, said the Government might only recoup half the face value of the debt while the repayment system was in place. He published a pamphlet this week claiming that a sale could release an annual "pot of gold" of £1.6 billion for investment in education if repayment was linked to National Insurance.

Graduates are allowed to defer repayment if their earnings fall below £15,000. Almost half of those with loans were in this position last year.

Dr Barr said: "Going ahead in a hasty way while there are such high levels of deferment amounts to a waste of taxpayers' money. If the private sector was assured of a better repayment flow, the price could be much higher."

University vice-chancellors said they had no objection to the sale, as long as future proceeds went into the higher education system. But a spokeswoman said there would be concern if the system was fragmented and graduates had to deal with a different lender each year.

Student debts rise, page 9

Times narrows sales gap

THE gap between full-price sales of *The Times* and *The Daily Telegraph* has narrowed to fewer than 30,000, according to figures from newspaper industry auditors. *The Daily Telegraph's* average daily news-stand sales were 710,295 in June, against 680,494 for *The Times*, the Audit Bureau of Circulations said yesterday.

The bureau's figures also show that *The Daily Telegraph* relied on cut-price sales for more than 25 per cent of its net circulation in June; the corresponding figure for *The Times* was less than 2 per cent. It is the first time that the bureau has published figures for full-price and cut-price sales separately. The distinction is important because advertisers base their rates on full-price sales.

Gay clergy row

Homosexuality is threatening to split the Church of England and the general synod opening in York this weekend faces protests, demonstrations and "outings" over the issue. A survey is expected to show that many bishops are turning a blind eye to practising homosexuals..............Page 12

Stoned rabbit goes to the dogs on his one bad trip

By Robin Young

A REAL life Dylan the Rabbit, whose existence was one long ride on *The Magic Roundabout*, came to a tragic end when he was too laid back to escape the jaws of a voracious Staffordshire bull terrier.

The story of the latter-day Dylan, a rabbit so permanently stoned that he was known as Bonkers, was told in Sedgemoor magistrates' court, in the Somerset town of Bridgwater, when the animal's owner, Gillian Brown, 32 and unemployed, appeared on drug charges. Bonkers, the magistrates heard, was a "gentle, peace-loving" rabbit, normal in everything except his diet. He turned up his nose at carrots, lettuce and dandelion leaves and ate cannabis for breakfast, lunch and tea. He even indulged in late night pot sessions with his hippy owner. Brown grew cannabis alongside the M5 in Huntworth, Somerset and fed it to Bonkers because it was poor quality stuff. She was visited by RSPCA officials but denied that it was cruel to give her six-month-old rabbit canabis. She admitted possessing cannabis worth £350 and a small amount of amphetamines, and was ordered to do 50 hours' community service and one year's probation with £40 costs.

After the hearing, she said: "Bonkers was a lovely creature, a bit like Dylan of *The Magic Roundabout*. He would eat cannabis like grass, get high, crash out for a while, then come back for more ... sometimes he would get zonked out and freeze and just stare into space. I tried to give cannabis to my dog and hamster as well, but they didn't take to it."

After the case, Robin Walker, a member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, said: "The cannabis diet would not have done any harm although it could have affected his memory. But then rabbits are not too hot on poetry anyway."

Brown said Bonkers died after "reacting too slowly" to the terrier. He was so "spaced out" that he virtually allowed himself to be eaten alive. "It was his only bad trip."

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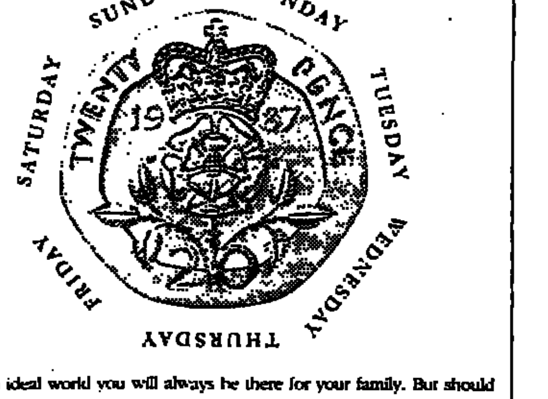

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THE TIMES ON MONDAY

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Molyneaux behind decision by Orangemen

By Nicholas Watt, chief Ireland correspondent

LORD Molyneaux of Killead, the former leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, came out of retirement to convince Orangemen to make one of the most momentous decisions in their 202-year history.

The "dull dog" of Ulster politics, as Lord Molyneaux once dubbed himself, played a central role at a lengthy meeting in Belfast on Thursday which led to the dramatic announcement about four contentious Orange parades.

Lord Molyneaux, 76, who stood down as an MP at the general election after retiring as party leader two years ago, gently explained to the Orangemen the consequences if the marches went ahead on the Lower Ormeau Road in Belfast and through the centres of Londonderry, Armagh city and Newry.

Sources close to the talks said that he warned the Orangemen that republican terrorists would unleash a wave of violence if they went ahead. He pointed out that Orangemen would outflank republicans and win worldwide praise if they made a conciliatory gesture on the marches.

The softly-spoken former Unionist leader spelt out his message during a day-long meeting at the headquarters of the Orange Order in Belfast on Thursday. He ran through options with leaders of Northern Ireland's seven county lodges. His closest ally was John McCrea, the Order's Grand Secretary.

Lord Molyneaux's message about the terrorist threat was reinforced by Ronnie Flanagan, the Chief Constable of the RUC, who joined the talks after lunch. His attendance was meant to be a secret, but a BBC television crew who happened to be having lunch in a cafe next to Orange House managed to record his arrival.

Orange Order sources said that they were left in no doubt of the very serious threat they would face if the marches went ahead. Up to 5,000 protesters were expected on the Lower Ormeau Road, while thousands of nationalists would mass in the centre of Londonderry to oppose the city's Orange parade.

Lord Molyneaux and Mr McCrea won over sceptics by outlining the huge benefits of agreeing not to march through the contentious Roman Catholic areas. One Orange source said: "They talked about the tremendous PR images that we would send round the world. It would also pull the rug from under the nationalist 'residents' groups which oppose our marches."

Later, seven county lodges met individually to assess their options. Just before midnight the four lodges, which were due to hold the most controversial marches during today's July 12 celebrations, issued their statements saying that they would either cancel or re-route their marches.

The statements all made clear that the threat of terrorism was the greatest factor which convinced them to change their plans.

Lord Molyneaux is highly respected throughout the Orange Order, of which he is a former Imperial Grand Master. Many Unionists also remember his calming influence during the 16 hectic years that he led the Ulster Unionists.

Hardline Orangemen, who tend to be based at the lower district level, did not attend Thursday's meetings. The Co Armagh delegation, for example, included the Rev William Bingham and Dennis Watson, who are moderates and would have agreed to waive their right to hold last Sunday's Drumcree parade. Harold Gracey, the Portadown District Master, who refused to compromise over Drumcree, did not attend Thursday's meetings.

Lord Molyneaux remained typically self-effacing yesterday and praised the County Grand Masters for their "great courage".

IAN WALDIE

A sculpture of a dove of peace has been put up on Ormeau bridge in Belfast

Blair and Ahern pledge on peace

TONY BLAIR had a 20-minute telephone conversation with the Irish Prime Minister yesterday to discuss the decision by Orangemen to cancel and reroute parades (Audrey Magee writes).

Mr Blair thanked Bertie Ahern for his statement, in which Mr Ahern said the Orangemen's decision was "a positive gesture by the Orange Order and the Government believes that it deserves an equally positive response from nationalists".

The two men said they were determined to keep the peace process moving and would stay in touch during the summer.

There was widespread relief in the Irish Republic that a feared weekend of violence had been averted. Sean Brady, Roman Catholic Primate of All Ireland, said the Orangemen's decision was a victory for courage and compromise.

John Bruton, the leader of the opposition Fine Gael party, said the decision to reroute was a mark of self-confidence and strategic thinking within the Unionist community.

Parades backlash

Continued from page 1

Trimble, the Ulster Unionist leader, said: "I think the matter needs consideration, but I am not going to be precipitous." He added that he had mixed feelings about the Orange Order's gesture. "I am quite sure they do not want their decision to be taken as a permanent decision. It is a purely temporary gesture that has been made in order to deny Sinn Fein/IRA the opportunity to cause mayhem."

His comments underlined the deep unease within the Ulster Unionist Party over the parades offer. However, Jeffrey Donaldson, the UUP MP for Lagan Valley who is also an Assistant Grand Master of the Orange Order, said: "I hope the people of Northern Ireland will have seen the Orange Order is acting in the best interests of Northern Ireland."

Attention will now turn to a series of small Orange parades due to pass through nationalist areas today. Clashes could erupt when Orangemen atempt to march through Bellaghy, Co Londonderry, and Dunloy, Co Antrim.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Firms with bad debts to be listed

Companies that delay settling their commercial debts will be named in a "table of shame" so that small firms can avoid doing business with them. The table will be compiled by the Federation of Small Businesses with the support of the Department of Trade and Industry. It is expected to give the payment records of all 18,000 companies whose details are held at Companies House, and will be available from the middle of next year.

The table is part of a package of measures planned by the Government to stop late payment of commercial debts. The DTI will publish within the next three weeks its proposals for the statutory payment of interest on debts which are not settled within a certain time. More than £15 billion is estimated to be owed in business debts.

MP on benefit as wife worked

The first Sinn Fein member of the Irish Parliament in almost 80 years took dole money he was not entitled to, it was disclosed yesterday. Caoimhghin O Caolain, 43, who pledged to fight sleaze in Irish politics, claimed £20,000 unemployment benefit for his dependants while his wife was working. He is repaying the money from his parliamentary salary of £34,700. The benefit was claimed from 1986 to 1991 after he left a bank to work full-time for the party.

Fischler offers beef ban hope

Franz Fischler, the European Agriculture Commissioner, held out hopes of an end to the ban on the export of British beef yesterday. At a meeting with 200 farmers at the Royal Welsh Agricultural Showground at Builth Wells, Powys, Herr Fischler said the latest proposals being considered by the Government that meat from cattle born after a certain date should be exported once more could offer "the way forward" out of the beef impasse.

Sailing home in triumph

An engineer, a carpet fitter and a psychiatrist are due to sail into Portsmouth today after completing a 4,100-mile voyage across the Atlantic in a tiny, open-topped powerboat. Alan Priddy, 43, Steve Lloyd, 39, and Jan Falkowski, 36, set out from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, three weeks ago on board the 24ft *Spirit of Portsmouth*. Their fourth crew member had to pull out of the journey in Iceland because of seasickness and exhaustion.

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BA wants talks with strike union

By Philip Bassett and Stephen Farrell

BRITISH Airways looked set for talks with cabin crew last night after an acrimonious 72-hour strike.

Bob Ayling, the airline's chief executive, said the end of the first three days of dispute at 6am today presented an opportunity for negotiations.

He told the Transport and General Workers' Union general secretary Bill Morris he wanted to examine the union's alternative proposals to achieve the £42 million savings that BA is seeking in its cabin crew operation.

Fresh strike action is now impossible for at least a week because employment law requires the union to give seven days' notice. Mr Ayling yesterday wrote to the TGWU proposing a "way forward" to resolve the dispute with the TGWU's cabin crew union Bassa. He said: "I believe the end of the Bassa strike really does present an opportunity for peace. I believe we both have a responsibility to seize that opportunity. If our discussions show that your proposals can deliver £42 million in a realistic way, we would be happy to sit down with you and Cabin Crew '89 to see whether there is a deal, acceptable to all parties, that is better than the current agreement."

The move followed a call by Mr Morris for a "pause for peace". He indicated the union was ready for talks on both the cabin crew dispute and a parallel dispute with ground staff catering workers, who voted on Thursday to reject the company's offer.

Mr Morris was hopeful about the talks: "We are not anticipating failure. We are planning for success. What we want to do is find solutions to two problems."

BA hopes to fly at least 75 per cent of its long-haul weekend flights from Heathrow, and around half its European flights.

Sex war in sports

Continued from page 1

writes in *Angling Times*, Britain's biggest-selling fishing paper, says in the latest issue that if women want to play men's games they should not expect the rules to be changed to accommodate them.

"The first thing that happens is that the rest of us men have to watch where we 'water our horses' so we don't insult the women", he writes. "I for one don't want to bump into a woman answering the call of nature in the bushes — and I'm sure women would feel exactly the same about me."

He adds: "Most men swear and one of the places we do it is on the bank with our mates. An example might be a big fish leaping out of the water right over your bait. You don't say 'golly gosh, wasn't that a large fish', you say '**** me, did you see the size of that?'."

Mr Taylor, whose wife Margaret does not fish (she is one of Mr Briggs's golf-playing "cockroaches"), particularly objects to women who accompany spouses or partners to the bank, often with noisy children in tow.

"Some women ... get annoyed by our swearing but think nothing of us poor blokes having to listen to them screaming in sexual delight inside their bivouacks with their boyfriends."

Anne Pickering, who has represented England in the world coarse fishing championships for ladies, says attitudes like Mr Taylor's are not uncommon. "Even if you are a serious angler, you quite often hear comments from men like 'Oh, my God, they are allowing women on the riverbank now'. Women swear too if they lose a big fish. Men do not like it if they are drawn against you and get beaten."

Nicola Church, England's leading female fly-fisher, said: "Male competitors sometimes urinate into a small bucket if the need arises during a long session, but that does not worry me or them."

Women anglers, page 4
Leading article, page 23

THE TIMES

Crossword Championship 1997

The Times Crossword Championship 1997 will now take place at the first Mind Sports Olympiad, at the Royal Festival Hall, London, on Sunday August 24 between 3pm and 6.30pm.

This year's championship will be in a new format. It will be launched with a qualifying puzzle which will be published in *The Times* next Thursday, July 17. Readers who solve this qualifier will then be invited to the Royal Festival Hall to compete in further rounds for the chance to become this year's champion.

THE MIND SPORTS OLYMPIAD

Royal Festival Hall, London, August 18-24, 1997

SEE THE QUALIFYING CROSSWORD IN THE TIMES ON THURSDAY, JULY 17

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MP chases bag snatcher after traffic jam theft

By Stephen Farrell and James Landale

CHERYL GILLAN, the Tory trade spokeswoman, chased a thief along a dual carriageway yesterday after he snatched her handbag while she was caught in traffic.

Mrs Gillan, 45, MP for Chesham and Amersham, was left shocked but unhurt after the thief opened the unlocked passenger door of her M-registration Land Rover Discovery and took the bag from the seat.

She leapt from the car and gave chase along the A40 in Hammersmith, west London, an area notorious for thefts from motorists, while other drivers called police. The thief escaped over a fence.

Mrs Gillan said last night that she had left herself vulnerable to attack by failing to lock the doors. "I was stuck in traffic and this young man just opened up the door and was away with my bag. It had everything in it, my purse, my keys, my cards and my House of Commons pass.

"I slammed the gears into neutral and chased him down the road. It became apparent that I wasn't going to catch him so I came back to the car and called 999 on my mobile telephone.

"I was not hurt but it was a horrible thing to happen. It is a good lesson to women driving to lock their doors and hide their handbags."

The attack happened shortly before 4pm as Mrs Gillan was on her way from the Commons to present an Investors in People award at Chalfont Community College. She immediately contacted her constituency agent to cancel the appointment because she felt in "no fit state to drive".

The bag was later found by a member of the public. Her keys and security pass were inside but the thief had taken the credit cards and all the cash she had withdrawn for a weekend with her mother.

Mrs Gillan, formerly marketing director of an international accounting firm, would not reveal how much cash she had lost, but said: "The thief will have a good weekend."

She was interviewed by police before driving back to her flat in London. Her agent, Richard Hill, said later: "When she telephoned me she was very shaken and crying, as anyone would be. She usually leaves her handbag on the passenger seat but puts the central locking on. She admitted she had not done so this time.

"Her first thought was for her constituents and that was why she called me, to let the college know she could not attend. I think the thief simply saw a woman on her own in a fairly new vehicle and carried out an opportunistic crime."

Gillan: had not locked the passenger door

GILL ALLEN

Commander Jonathan Maughan, of the Royal Naval College, greets Spanish dancers before their performance in the opening ceremony of the Greenwich and Docklands International Festival. The welcome marked the first time the public was allowed within the college precinct

Poll-rigging civil servant keeps her job

By Valerie Elliott
Whitehall Editor

THE woman civil servant who tried to swing the Radio 4 *Today* programme personality of the year poll in favour of Tony Blair is to keep her job at the Ministry of Agriculture.

Jules Hurry, 40, is to return to her £35,000-a-year-post in the autumn after facing an internal disciplinary inquiry.

A ministry spokesman confirmed last night that a letter had been sent to Ms Hurry last week and that she would be returning to work in the autumn. Ms Hurry was unavailable last night. She and her husband, Alan Griffiths, who has worked occasionally for the Liberal Democrats, live in Islington, north London.

She had asked the ministry for unpaid leave from November last year to May to help care for her husband, who has been receiving treatment at a London hospital but during that time was working for the Labour Party's election campaign headquarters at Millbank and who walks with a stick. The Conservative Party sense they have found another chink in the Government's armour and are to demand a full explanation from ministers.

Nigel Evans, a Tory frontbencher, said: "It is pointless Tony Blair saying that he does not believe in the politicisation of the Civil Service if at the same time someone who is a civil servant and was working at Millbank Tower for the Labour Party is allowed back to work in the Ministry of Agriculture. The House of Comons deserves to be told the results of the investigation into this internal affair."

He said last night that if answers were not forthcoming he would table questions to Mr Blair and to Dr Cunningham. Mr Evans, Tory MP for Ribble Valley, had raised the question of Ms Hurry before the Commons public service committee in the last Parliament and demanded to know if she was in breach of her contract as an impartial civil servant.

Sir Robin assured him the matter was being taken very seriously in Whitehall and an investigation was taking place. Last night a Cabinet Office spokesman would not elaborate on the matter. "This is a matter for MAFF. Sir Robin has no locus on this."

Whitehall officials launched an immediate investigation after it emerged that a civil servant on leave had been working three days a week for the Labour Party at their Millbank Tower headquarters. The inquiry was ordered internally by Richard Packer, permanent secretary at the ministry.

Her name appeared on the top of a letter faxed to Labour activists urging them to send in nominations for Mr Blair for the Radio 4 *Today* programme's Personaloty of the Year feature and to persuade six others to follow suit. Mr Blair was subsequently disqualified by the BBC from taking part in the radio ballot and the affair was deeply embarrassing for the Labour Party. The party said the letter to activists had been written by a junior member of staff and that they would never have authorised such a tactic.

Juvenile offenders get taste of Maori values

By Stewart Tendler
Crime Correspondent

A TEENAGE thief yesterday became the first young offender in the country to begin a pilot scheme based on Maori family values.

Under the scheme, being tested in Hampshire, young offenders attend a family group conference which can include their victims, social workers, police and members of their family, including not only parents but siblings, uncles and aunts. After the conference the offender and his family are left to decide what he should do to make up for the crime. This is then offered to the victim and the scheme's coordinators.

Offenders qualify for the scheme on their second offence when they would otherwise face a court appearance. They have to accept that they committed the crime; and, if their family refuses to attend, they will then face court.

The scheme is based on a system in New Zealand and developed from Maori customs. The Maoris use the pressure and responsibilities of families to keep young offenders from further trouble. The scheme is being tested for two years in the Basingstoke area and two juveniles will take part each month under the auspices of the Hampton Trust, a charity for reforming young offenders.

Ros Cassy, of the trust, said penalties under the scheme could include the young offender selling a personal possession to get money to compensate the victim. The youth could do work for the victim or take up a sporting or community project to keep them out of trouble.

Ms Cassy said that sometimes families felt they could not cope but the conference could offer them support to deal with the child.

No charge for Parker Bowles over crash

By Damian Whitworth
and Stewart Tendler

CAMILLA Parker Bowles will not be prosecuted over her involvement in a car crash in a lane close to Highgrove, the home of the Prince of Wales. Police said last night that there was insufficient evidence to bring charges in connection with the collision, after which Mrs Parker Bowles was accused of fleeing the scene.

Mrs Parker Bowles and the other driver, Carolyn Melville-Smith, were not seriously hurt in the incident near Malmesbury, Wiltshire, on June 11. Miss Melville-Smith's car was badly damaged and in the aftermath of the accident she said that Mrs Parker Bowles had "appeared like a missile" and then left the immediate scene while she was trapped in her Volvo estate.

Mrs Parker Bowles explained that she had left her Ford Mondeo to find a location where she could get a signal on her mobile phone to call for help to the police and the Prince of Wales.

A report on the case was sent to the Crown Prosecution Service by Wiltshire police but lawyers said no charges could be brought. Miss Melville-Smith, 53, an interior designer, said last night that she had not wanted Mrs Parker Bowles to be prosecuted. "So long as I am not left out of pocket, I am happy to let the matter rest."

Pigeons cleared over death of cathedral owl

By Kathryn Knight

PATHOLOGISTS investigating the death of the eagle owl that recently made its home in St Paul's Cathedral, have discovered that Paula, as the bird was named, was in fact Paul.

The post mortem examination at London Zoo yesterday also revealed that the owl's two-week residence in the cathedral was a swansong after two years swooping round the capital.

Contrary to the suspicions of cathedral workers that Paula, or Paul, had been poisoned by a dodgy pigeon or subjected to foul play, the examination revealed it had contracted a bacterial wasting disease and had been ill for several weeks.

Paula, which turned out to be Paul, at St Paul's

The bird stood 20 inches tall with a 5ft wingspan and appeared to be feeding well on pigeons and mice since nesting in the rafters of the cathedral dome.

However its body was spotted on Monday morning lying face down on a ledge by office workers.

Yesterday Andrew Cunningham, a veterinary pathologist from the Zoological Society who performed the autopsy, said the owl had died of necrobacillosis, a bacterial infection that causes tissue to die, and was thin and dehydrated.

"The animal had probably been sick for days, perhaps weeks, given the evidence of long-term spleen infection. It is impossible to say where the infection had come from although necrobacillosis is very unusual in birds."

As for the confusion over gender, a spokeswoman for London Zoo said it was an easy mistake to make. The RSPCA inspector who had named the bird Paula, she said, had had to do it from a distance.

"Owls and birds of prey are very difficult to sex because they don't have obvious genitalia. You can sometimes tell by their plumage but really you have to look surgically. Female eagle owls are usually bigger but we just didn't get close enough to work out its size," she said.

The Queen honours Dunblane teachers

By Shirley English

THE Queen honoured three teachers yesterday for their bravery in the Dunblane massacre. Rod Mayor accepted an award on behalf of his wife, Gwen, who was killed with 16 primary school children

Mr Mayor and the two teachers who survived, Eileen Harrild, 44, and Mary Blake, 50, received the Queen's Commendation for Bravery, a silver laurel leaf broach, in a ceremony at the Palace of Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh. Mrs Harrild, a PE teacher, and Mrs Blake, a special needs teacher, were both badly injured in the gun attack and have not returned to work.

The three, accompanied by their families, had tea and chatted with the Queen after a 40-minute private audience. They said later that the parents of the children who died were uppermost in their thoughts.

Mrs Harrild, who was shot four times in the arms and chest by Thomas Hamilton, said: "I just wish we were receiving this award for a different reason."

Rod Mayor was accompanied by his two daughters, Ester, 22, and Deborah, 20, his wife's sister, Joan Bedford, and her parents Edna and Ken Hodgson, from Penrith. He said he felt both privileged and honoured. "Gwen has been recognised for what we always knew she was."

Bare-breasted memorial to designer of Cutty Sark 'is over the top'

By Shirley English

A VOLUPTUOUS statue unveiled yesterday in memory of the designer of the tea clipper *Cutty Sark* has sparked a bitter row in the village of his birth. Villagers in Inverbervie, near Aberdeen, are outraged that the bare-breasted memorial to Hercules Linton has replaced a more dignified statue which they commissioned and paid for by public subscription 30 years ago.

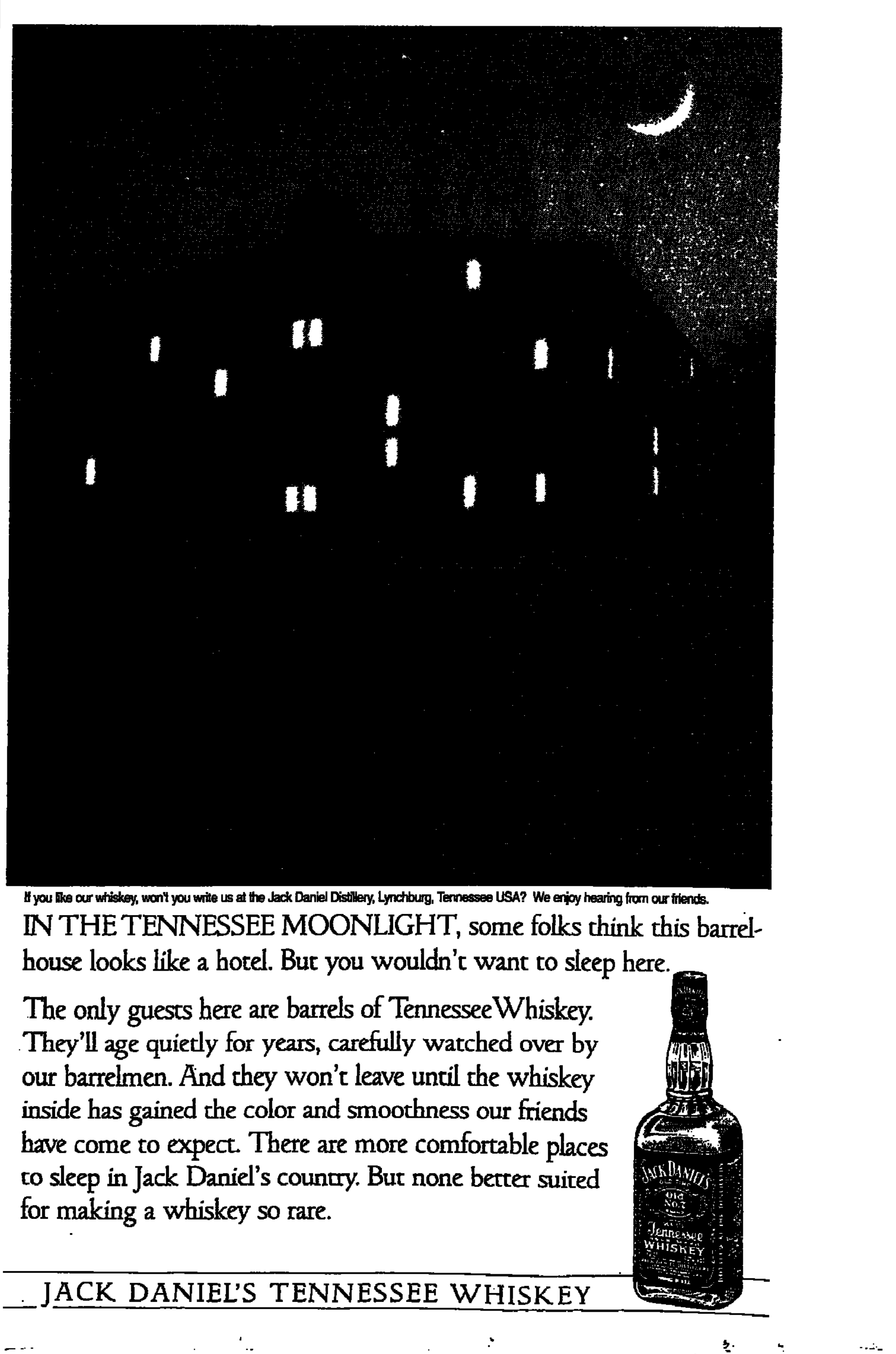
Protesters carrying placards gathered for the unveiling ceremony yesterday at the entrance to the village, casting a shadow over the start of the Tall Ships Race in Aberdeen.

The new painted wooden statue is based on the tea clipper's original figurehead of the bare-breasted witch from Robert Burns's poem *Tam o'Shanter*. But villagers, who have formed the Save Our Linton Memorial group, said the figure was too well-endowed and gaudy for their liking. "It belongs in Blackpool Tower," said Alistair Reid, 72, from Inverbervie, who was involved in raising money for the original statue in the 1960s. "It is just obscene and a very vulgar thing to put in front of our children. It's a travesty to the memory of Hercules Linton."

The row began two months ago when council-funded Gourdon and Inverbervie Village Enterprise (GIVE) decided to replace the original fibre-glass statue, which was showing signs of wear and vandalism. The old memorial was based on a sculpture in the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich by Scott Sutherland, the Scottish artist. Villagers raised around £2,000 to commission it and it was unveiled in 1969 by the yachtsman Sir Francis Chichester.

Mr Reid said that about two months ago it was removed without consultation and transferred to the headquarters of the Aberdeen Sea Cadet Corps. "That was our statue. It was paid for by public subscription and no-one had the right to take it away," he said. Villagers are now considering legal action to have the statue returned.

Yesterday Jim Leacy, spokesman for the GIVE group, defended the new statue, but said he was going to resign. "This is what the figurehead looked like of the ship. I have been accosted in the street over this. It has been very upsetting," he said.



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JACK DANIEL'S TENNESSEE WHISKEY

Farmers on alert for potato beetles

By Audrey Magee

IRISH agriculture officials are on full alert after Colorado beetles were found in a shipment of potatoes from Italy. The 45 beetles, also known as the potato bug, are the largest number found in Ireland for a decade.

The orange and yellow striped insects attack potato leaves and the females deposit up to 500 bright yellow eggs on the underside. The Agriculture Department said that, if left undetected, they would cause enormous damage to the £75 million annual potato crop.

The department has implemented emergency procedures to examine shipments entering the country. The government has preserved the beetles from the Italian cargo to circulate to potato farmers unfamiliar with the insect's shape and size.

The beetle, native to the mid-west United States, originally fed on a wild plant in the potato family. It transferred its allegiance to the cultivated potato planted by settlers.

Measures for open government delayed

Valerie Elliott on snags facing ministers over freedom of information

MINISTERS have had to postpone measures to increase freedom of information because of the complexity of the issues. A White Paper which it had been hoped would be published for the summer recess will not now appear until October.

Among the difficulties are deciding which public authorities should be covered by the legislation. Under proposals being considered by ministers, the BBC and the private utility companies could come within its scope. Ministers have also become bogged down in the question of whether the new law could also apply to police, fire services and any private company which was contracted to do public work.

Reports that senior civil servants have blocked the proposals are wide of the mark although there are apparently some reservations about the cost. But it seems that policy advice from civil servants to ministers will remain outside the legislation.

David Clark, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, in an interview in next week's edition of *The Stakeholder*, a public service magazine, says: "Any factual or analytical evidence will be made available, but when it comes to advice, I don't want to drive it underground." He fears that officials would avoid putting advice on paper and that more decisions would be made and advice given on the telephone.

Dr Clark also indicated that he wishes to avoid protracted legal disputes over the release of information and wanted an officer of Parliament, probably the Ombudsman, to decide appeal cases. "I regard this as an issue of human rights and I think the final appeal ought to be to the representatives of the people and not to the judiciary."

Clark: unlikely to release advice from officials

The Lord Chancellor, Lord Irvine of Lairg QC, who chairs the ministerial group looking at the proposals, writing in *The Times* today, hints at the difficulties facing ministers and defends their wish for more time. He makes clear, however, that the Government does want to legislate for freedom of information and says that, rather than taking a soft option of putting an existing code of conduct into statute, ministers were engaged in a "root-and-branch" review of every issue.

Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, also confirmed yesterday the Government's commitment to a Freedom of Information Act but conceded that there were hurdles still to overcome. Another difficulty facing the group is how to track government documentation which exists on paper and as electronic messages.

Senior officials in Whitehall yesterday were irritated that they were being accused of blocking the legislation. They believe that ministers should never have promised to produce a White Paper on such a difficult area within such a narrow timescale.

Ministers themselves realised that they did not have enough time to consider the issues while the devolution White Papers were also about to be published.

The ministerial group met for the first time on Thursday and decided that they wanted to ensure the legislation was workable and also that it fitted in with political expectations. The legislation is still planned for inclusion in the next parliamentary session.

Lord Irvine of Lairg, page 22
Leading article, page 23

The Queen Mother, then Duchess of York, trout fishing in New Zealand in 1927

Feminine angle irresistible bait for male fish

By Kathryn Knight

WELL-known — and often unexpected — faces are among the growing number of women who enjoy casting a line.

Two of Britain's most doughty nonagenarians, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, who is 97 next month, and Dame Barbara Cartland, who was 96 on Wednesday, have long enjoyed the sport. Until recently the Queen Mother fished during her annual stay at Balmoral.

Dame Barbara was for many years a prolific salmon fisher. On her honeymoon in Sutherland in 1927, she caught her first salmon, a 14-pounder, and three lesser fish on her first attempt, and a hobby was born.

But she said yesterday that a little angling was all right for women but it was better left to men. "Women are such a nuisance. They say, 'I must do this and this and this.' They are doing everything, they are becoming men, and their children are neglected."

Fiona Armstrong, the former television newsreader, has written a beginner's guide to salmon fishing, *F is for Fly-Fishing*. Dame Diana Rigg, the actress, enjoys angling and recently said that her time spent upon a Scottish estate during her marriage to a landowner had persuaded her that women's sex makes them attractive to their prey. "Their condition makes them extra pheromonic and huge male salmon hurl themselves on to their hook because of it."

Frances Shand Kydd, the mother of Diana, Princess of Wales, has been an angler for 20 years. She said that she had only ever caught male fish, and plenty of those.

In their book *Salmon and Women, the Feminine Angle*, Peter Behan and Wilma Paterson tell of Lady Graham, mother of the Marquess of Montrose, who was an expert fisherwoman and would often catch fish while the men's lines remained empty. But her name never appeared in the estate game book, which registered catches.

Family of murdered man held by police

By Paul Wilkinson

THE wife, daughter and a son of a man murdered nine months ago have been arrested. The three, and a male employee, are being questioned about the killing of Geoffrey Leeming, 63, who was stabbed to death in his garage in Haxby, near York.

Mr Leeming, a former soldier who ran a drains business, died after he went to check a lock while his wife, Jackie, 55, watched television. He was stabbed several times in the chest with a seven-inch, serrated kitchen knife which was found on a grass verge near by.

Detectives interviewed more than 1,000 people. In May Mrs Leeming appeared on *GMTV* and publicly denied suggestions that she was linked to the killing.

This year Mrs Leeming and her daughter, Jane, 30, took over the Marcia pub in the near by village of Bishopthorpe. Police arrived at the pub at about 7.30am yesterday and left with the women shortly afterwards.

At the same time her son Stephen, 32, was arrested at the farm where he lives outside York. The fourth person, a 37-year-old employee of the family business, who has not been named, was detained on Thursday night. They were being questioned at police stations in York and Selby.

Soon after her husband's death Mrs Leeming, accompanied by her family, told a press conference: "My husband was cruelly murdered. Whoever did it has taken my life and destroyed the life of his two sons and daughter, too."

Her other son, Neil, was not arrested and was yesterday at the pub. He refused to comment.

Golf club women keep men off par

By Russell Jenkins

A BATTLE of the sexes at a ladies' golf club where almost half the members are men has ended in a truce. The men are celebrating after being granted voting rights but the women, who have held sway since 1894, remain in control of the clubhouse.

Both sexes enjoy the same facilities and drink in the same bar at Wirral Ladies' Golf Club, near Birkenhead. But until now the 190 men, who pay the same £400-a-year fees, have been denied a say in the club's affairs.

The women gave way at an emergency general meeting after the men objected to the arrangement before the local licensing justices. Although they have allowed the men voting rights, they have enshrined the ascendancy of women in the club's articles of association. The club will continue to be called Wirral Ladies' Golf Club; the captain will always be a woman; the chairman of the management committee will also be a woman and lady members will enjoy numerical supremacy on the committee.

Susan Headford, the secretary and manager, said: "We have structured the new articles of association to ensure the traditions, so precious to us, will always be retained."

The Wirral club was formed by Herbert Potter, who built a nine-hole course for his wife, Gillie, and the "leisured ladies of the Wirral". Another nine holes was added as membership grew and in 1928 the women bought the land and formed a limited company.

The women believe that they have conceded enough to retain the club's licence. The case will be heard by Wirral magistrates on Wednesday.

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Schools may pay £1 per pupil for access to Internet

September start is planned, **Christine Buckley** reports

SCHOOLS could get unlimited use of the Internet for as little as £1 per pupil per year under plans drawn up by the Director-General of Telecommunications Don Cruickshank, the industry regulator, yesterday set out a pricing scheme for schools that reduces by 80 per cent the cost of access to ordinary customers.

The regime, which would mean a charge of £665 per school per year, means much cheaper telephone calls to the Internet than BT had originally outlined. Based on an average secondary school, pupils will be able to use the Internet for £1 a year each.

In May, in a submission to the regulator which was rejected because it offered BT-only access to the Net, the company had offered charges of £790 per school based on three hours use per day for 15 computers. The company had said it could not offer lower charges because of prices it had to pay other telephone line operators to transfer calls to Internet service providers.

After talking to other companies over interconnection costs, Mr Cruickshank believes that all parties in the industry are willing to play their part to deliver cheap services to schools.

The new pricing level, which goes out to industry for consultation, means BT and cable companies are unlikely to earn cash from serving schools but they will be enticed to provide the service by the prospect of catching technology users at a young age. They will also wire up the schools free of charge.

Mr Cruickshank said he hoped pricing and other arrangements would be sealed soon to allow nationwide access early in the next academic year.

Linking the UK's 30,000 schools to the Internet has been led by Tony Blair, who made it a pledge when Labour was in opposition. Yesterday, Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, said: "The plan to have agreement in the coming academic year is testimony to the commitment that all the interested parties have in achieving the Government's objectives."

David Blunkett, the Education and Employment Secretary, said he welcomed the proposals. "In our White Paper, *Excellence for Schools*, we reaffirmed our commitment to create a National Grid for Learning, an unprecedented Internet-based educational resource."

BT said that it was considering the pricing proposals. The Cable Communications Association, which supported the regulator's move, said: "BT may provide the physical link to the great majority of schools, but most Internet and other on-line services are provided by the rest of the telecommunications industry, not BT. It is therefore vital that the industry as a whole participates."

Next on the agenda for the telecommunications regulator will be prices for Internet access for colleges of further education. Future plans will involve libraries and public buildings such as hospitals.

Kiosk gives the jobless a link into cyberspace

By Russell Jenkins

AN "Internet Kiosk" was opened yesterday to give those who cannot afford a computer a gateway into cyberspace.

The touch screen booth, housed in a community centre in Hulme, central Manchester, is the first of six to be set up across the city for the "technologically disadvantaged", and is part of an EU-funded pilot project. The jobless and homeless will be able to surf the Internet for jobs, information about benefits and community news. They can also e-mail potential employers.

Kiosks will be installed in an Asda superstore, public libraries, a neighbourhood office and an office of the magazine *The Big Issue*.

The project is the first fruit of a public and private partnership between the information technology service group Sema, the electronics company NEC, Manchester City Council and Internet services company VirginNet. Vin Sumner, Sema's business development director, said: "More and more people are starting to benefit from the information society but a gap is starting to appear between the haves and have-nots."

The kiosk, called Magic Touch, was opened by the former Manchester United and England footballer Sir Bobby Charlton at the Kath Locke Centre in Hulme.

Tony Wilson, a Granada television presenter, said that it was fitting that the first free-access computer should be launched in Manchester where the computer was born nearly 50 years ago. The technological revolution, he said, should not be barred to people who could not afford to buy their own computer.

Its organisers were claiming that the casual user would be able to search on-line for employment databases, benefit entitlements, newspapers and news about events in Manchester. Users will be able to register using an alias and, for at least the first six months, send and receive their own confidential e-mail account.

Dog's life: a Scottie takes to the catwalk at Harrods yesterday in a tartan outfit. Clothes for dogs under the Barking Mad label cover formal wear, evening attire, rainproofs and party frocks. Prices start from £89.95

Call for new gambling laws

By Richard Ford, home correspondent

A FAR-REACHING review of the gaming laws was demanded yesterday to control the development of gambling on the Internet and proposals for televised bingo in pubs and supermarkets.

The Gaming Board said the Internet would bring hard gambling into the home, with no restrictions on credit or the involvement of children.

The board also expressed alarm at plans by Camelot and a rival firm to introduce Keno, a lottery-style game popular in the United States and the Far East. It said this type of gambling should take place only in licensed premises that excluded people under 18.

The board's annual report, published yesterday, said: "Large-scale and hard gambling activities could become available in people's homes with no proper control over such matters as gambling on credit or by children. The potential also arises for criminal involvement in organising the gaming and for its use for money laundering and other criminal purposes."

Proposals for Keno in Britain have been put forward by Camelot, the National Lottery operator, and Inter Lotto. Critics complain that the highly popular game is addictive because it can be played every five minutes. Players choose how many numbers they hope to match, with winnings rising accordingly.

The annual report says: "The board has made clear its unease about repetitive, frequent games. Pubs and clubs were never intended to be used for hard gambling."

The report urges ministers to set up an independent review of the 1968 Gaming Act and of the consequences of greater opportunities to gamble, for the industry and the public. "Concern about problem and addictive gambling is growing, as gambling opportunities grow. There is the prospect of devolution, which will raise invevitable questions about where responsibility for gambling legislation in Scotland and Wales should rest. The questions of unregulated gambling on the Internet, ships and aircraft and the possible effects of interactive television need to be addressed," the report says.

Souvenir seller who joined drug ring is jailed

By A Staff Reporter

A MONEY courier in a £37 million cocaine smuggling scheme was jailed for seven years yesterday. Thomas Hutton, 52, was described at Bristol Crown Court as a foot-soldier rather than an officer in the drugs operation.

Hutton, who at one time ran a souvenir stall in Oxford Street, London, was assessed by Judge John Foley as benefitting from his drug dealings by £1 million. He was ordered to hand over assets of £91,867 within 12 months or serve up to two more years in jail. Hutton, who lived in Medellin, Colombia, admitted one charge of conspiracy and two of money-laundering.

They arose after Customs and Excise officers infiltrated the laundering operation and later boarded the catamaran *Frugal* as it put into Pevensey Bay, East Sussex, on a January night in 1995 with a cargo of Colombian cocaine with a street value of £37 million.

Hutton met his wife Miriam at his souvenir stall when she was a tourist. He followed her to Colombia, where they married.

They later moved to Miami, where he became involved with her Colombian friends and became a courier for drugs money. He served five years in Los Angeles for interstate money-running.

Yesterday Michael Parroy, QC, for the prosecution, said that Hutton returned to Britain in 1994 to contact Brian Doran, 52, of South Kensington, and Kenneth Togher, 33, of West Brompton. They were leading organisers of the Pevensey Bay drugs run and will be sentenced on Monday for their part in that and other drugs operations.

Alex Carlile, QC, representing Hutton, said that he had drifted into crime. His father was an author on anti-Soviet espionage and "lived very much in a cloak-and-dagger world". Hutton "was a foot-soldier rather than a manager" in the drugs operation.

The trials follow an undercover customs operation which broke a £65 million international drugs ring and led to 44 arrests.

Blind student triumphs at Oxford

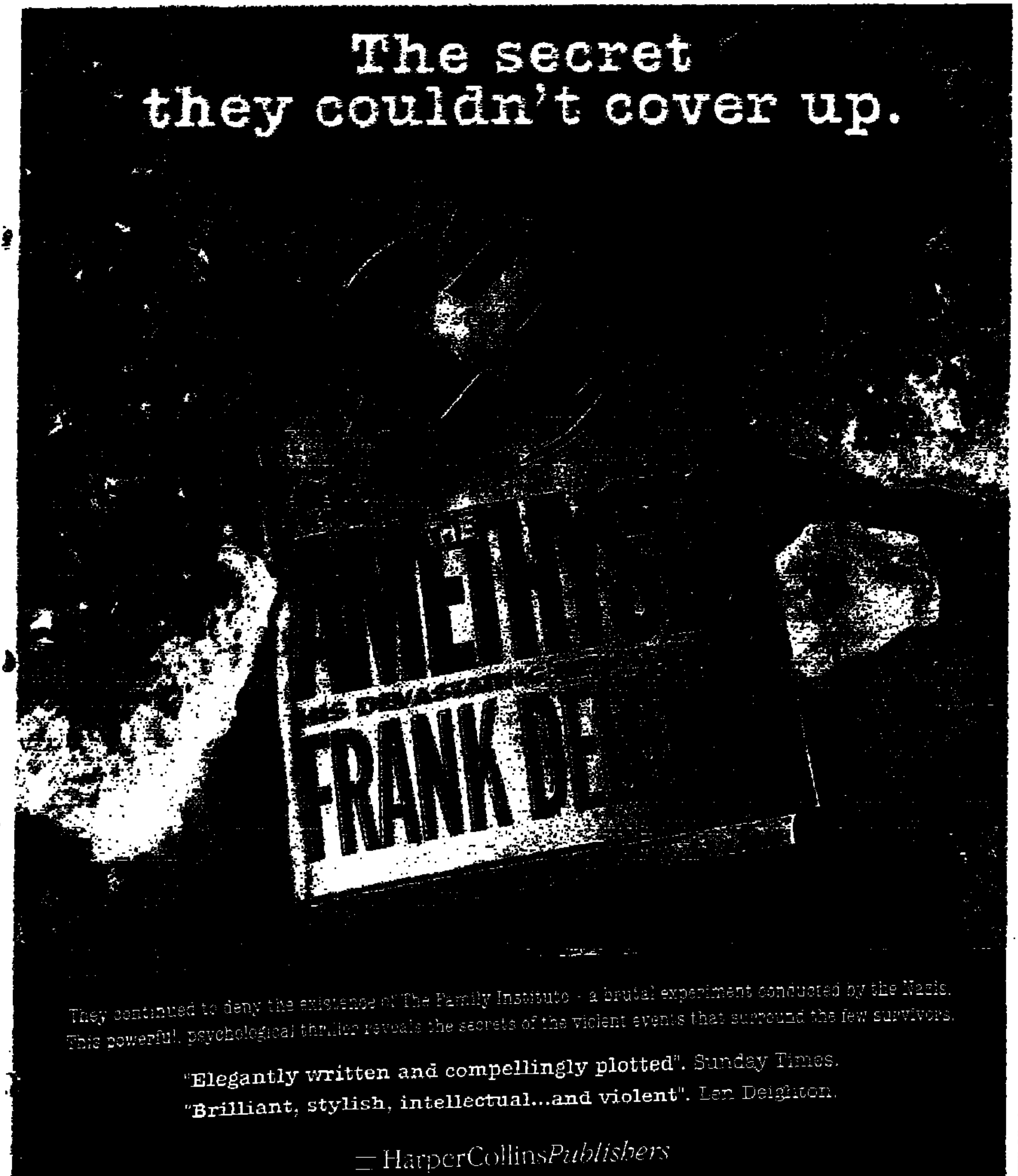
By Kathryn Knight

A BLIND student who had been advised to give up any thoughts of an academic career was awarded a first-class degree from Oxford University yesterday.

Ben Merrick, 23, has a rare hereditary disease that struck in his late teens, reducing his vision to a blur. He defied his doctor to study French and Latin at Exeter College for four years using audio books and a voice-operated computer. He hopes to work for the Home Office or the Ministry of Defence.

Mr Merrick, of Great Missenden, Buckinghamshire, said that his vision began to fail during his year off after leaving school. "I remember a doctor in London telling me that I might as well give up because I would never get through a degree," he said. "I would say to anyone, you should just go for it. I have always viewed it as a practical problem rather than a major drawback."

He praised the staff of the Oxford Recording Centre for the Blind, based at the university's Bodleian Library, who tape-recorded hundreds of books and passages for him. "Without them, I couldn't have done anything," he said.



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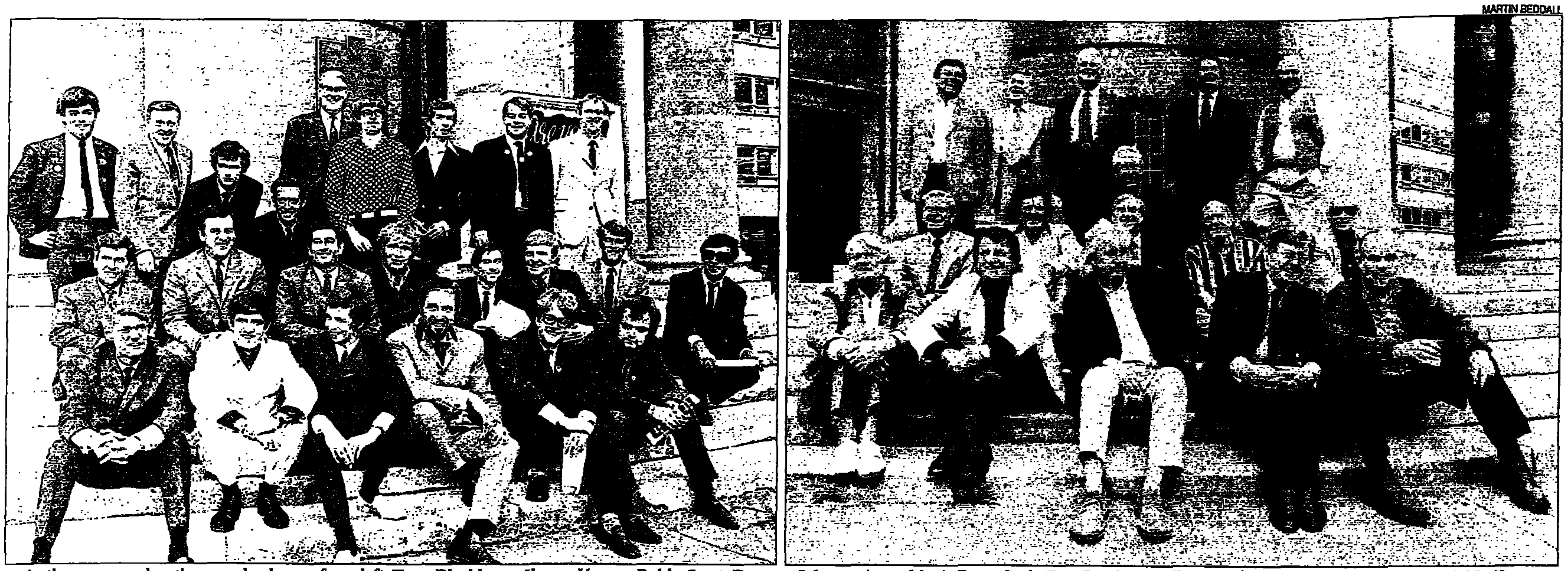

As they were and as they are: back row, from left, Tony Blackburn, Jimmy Young, Robin Scott, Duncan Johnson (crouching), Dave Cash, Pete Brady; middle row, Bob Holness, Terry Wogan, Keith Skues, Chris Denning, Pete Myers; front row, Pete Murray, Ed Stewart, Pete Drummond, Mike Ahern, and John Peel. Kenny Everett, Barry Aldiss and Mike Raven, who were in the original picture, have died

Long-playing DJs sing praises of 30 years of Radio 1

FACES and voices from 30 years of radio history were reunited yesterday as Terry Wogan rubbed shoulders again with Jimmy Young, Ed "Stewpot" Stewart and Tony Blackburn. The faces are older and voices mellower but the 16 men who took BBC Radio 1 into the nation's heart are more enthusiastic about their trade than ever. When Tony Blackburn at the age of 24 picked up the microphone to open his *Breakfast Show* on September 30, 1967, he was heard by 19 million listeners — an overwhelming audience in today's multi-station world. He spoke to a nation worried about the "pound in your pocket" phrase of Harold Wilson, the Prime Minister, and fascinated by Twiggy in Mary Quant's clothes. Now Blackburn is still playing the same music to a different audience on his *Capital Gold Breakfast Show*. He said yesterday: "This morning I played *Flowers In The Rain*, by The Move, which was a big hit in 1967. It was the song I opened Radio 1 with 30 years ago." For the 15 young men and Robin Scott, then Controller of Radio 1 and 2, the station was a stepping stone to success. "It was the best thing that could happen to anyone. It was tremendous," Blackburn said. "It was the only thing I wanted to do then and I still love it. I'm still doing discos now." Meeting the old familiar faces has also given Blackburn's morale a big boost. He joked: "I'm the only one who hasn't aged." The DJs who lined up on the steps of All Souls' Church outside BBC Broadcasting House were: Mike Ahern, Tony Blackburn, Pete Brady, Dave Cash, Chris Denning, Pete Drummond, Bob Holness, Duncan Johnson, Pete Murray, Pete Myers, John Peel, Keith Skues, Ed Stewart, Terry Wogan and Jimmy Young. Robin Scott was also there. Three others from the original picture, Kenny Everett, Barry Aldiss and Mike Raven, have died. BBC1 will broadcast a 50-minute documentary, *The Radio One Story*, this autumn to commemorate the station's 30 years.

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Social service budget cuts hit elderly

By Alexandra Frean, social affairs correspondent

ELDERLY people are bearing the brunt of cuts in local authority social services budgets as places in nursing homes are reduced and new charges introduced for essential home care, according to a report published yesterday.

The study by the Association of Directors of Social Services found that the cuts, which amount to £214 million a year or £2.5 million per authority, were increasing the workload of managers and staff by forcing them constantly to find new ways of coping within ever-tightening financial constraints. "The picture is a depressing and daunting one, with social services authorities across the country having to find reductions in their budget at a time of rising need," it concluded.

The report found that the vast majority of the 140 councils in England and Wales that it surveyed were seeking to protect child care services, which meant that the pressure was increasingly falling on services for adults, particularly those for elderly people.

Most of the authorities questioned had introduced stricter criteria for access to services, such as home care and nearly 40 per cent had introduced new charges for services that were previously free. Between them, they had withdrawn 2,280 places in nursing and care homes, an average of 28 places per authority.

Of particular concern to the association was the discovery that a few authorities were placing elderly people in residential care rather than supporting them in the community if the latter was more costly.

Given the demographic trends towards an ageing population, the association is concerned that spending and lack of investment in homes for the elderly could lead to a shortage of places.

The cuts represented about 4 per cent of the social services budgets, at a time of growing demand and tougher targets for quality, the study said. Authorities were seeking to generate additional funding, develop new ways of working, re-align their investments and improve their efficiency, but had an uphill struggle. "There is deep concern at the effects on the more vulnerable; and frustration that the good track record of services in introducing care in the community and new children's services is being undermined by budget constraints," it concluded.

Authorities are seeking to save money by changing conditions of service for staff and replacing highly-trained workers with less qualified and lower paid staff. Grants to voluntary organisations are being frozen.

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Andrews had 'motive for marriage, not murder'

By Joanna Bale

TRACIE ANDREWS is not a monster but a person wrongly accused of an horrendous crime, a court was told yesterday.

Miss Andrews, who is charged with the roadside murder of her fiancé Lee Harvey, had no motive for murder but a motive for marriage. She loved Mr Harvey and wanted to spend the rest of her life with him, Ronald Thwaites, QC, for the defence, said.

Mr Thwaites urged the jury to approach the case with an open mind. He criticised what he called prejudicial press coverage of the case, saying: "You may know of, or live with, one of the army of armchair detectives who ... pointed to Miss Andrews when she appeared on the television screen, and, knowing nothing of her other than her bruised blonde looks, said, 'If you ask me, I bet she did it'. And when days later she was arrested and charged with murder ... all those television pundits no doubt congratulated themselves."

Mr Thwaites, opening the defence, said that Miss Andrews was to give evidence on Monday so the jury could hear her side of the story. "The prosecution say she had a motive for murder. She says no, she had a motive for marriage. This is the man she had fixed upon to spend the rest of her life with. They had found glamour with each other, charm with each other. They wanted each other." He said that the couple had twice postponed their wedding but still hoped to marry and had attended marriage guidance. "She was wearing his ring on the night he died and is wearing it still today. She was committed to him."

> 'This is the man she had fixed upon to spend the rest of her life with'

He said the police had prematurely abandoned investigations into her claims that Mr Harvey was stabbed by a man who was the passenger in a Ford Sierra. This followed evidence from two people in a car which passed the couple near the murder scene who alleged there was no car following them. Mr Thwaites said: "You know that almost from the moment that those two witnesses were seen, the police investigation into the Sierra stalled and came to a complete stop, never to be restarted. Within 72 hours they closed the book on her account and never reopened it."

He described Miss Andrews as a generally sensible, level-headed, practical young woman who could cope with her life as a single mother. "By contrast, Mr Harvey was a person who could not cope very well with his life."

He said Mr Harvey hated his job at a bus garage which he had given up and gone back to before being dismissed. He did not get on with his family. He also had rows over maintenance with the mother of his young daughter who had taken out an injunction against him.

Mr Thwaites said: "He bitterly resented paying maintenance which was one of the reasons why he gave up his job, so that the CSA could not get money from his employers." Mr Thwaites said that it was Mr Harvey's jealousy and insecurity that caused their frequent rows. "He was obsessional about her. He spent his time tracking Tracie." Mr Thwaites disclosed that Miss Andrews had become pregnant by Mr. Harvey but decided on an abortion because they were having problems. "She wanted to have his child, but they were having problems. She did not see the relationship surviving and saw the child as a burden Lee did not welcome. She did not want to be left with two children by two men."

The termination was at 16 weeks and she immediately regretted it, Mr Thwaites said. "She was unable to tell him the truth about that until some weeks later, pretending she miscarried." As a result of the abortion, Mr Thwaites said, Miss Andrews lost her figure and bust and Mr Harvey made unkind remarks which she found deeply hurtful. He later apologised and paid for breast implants.

Miss Andrews denies murder. The case continues.

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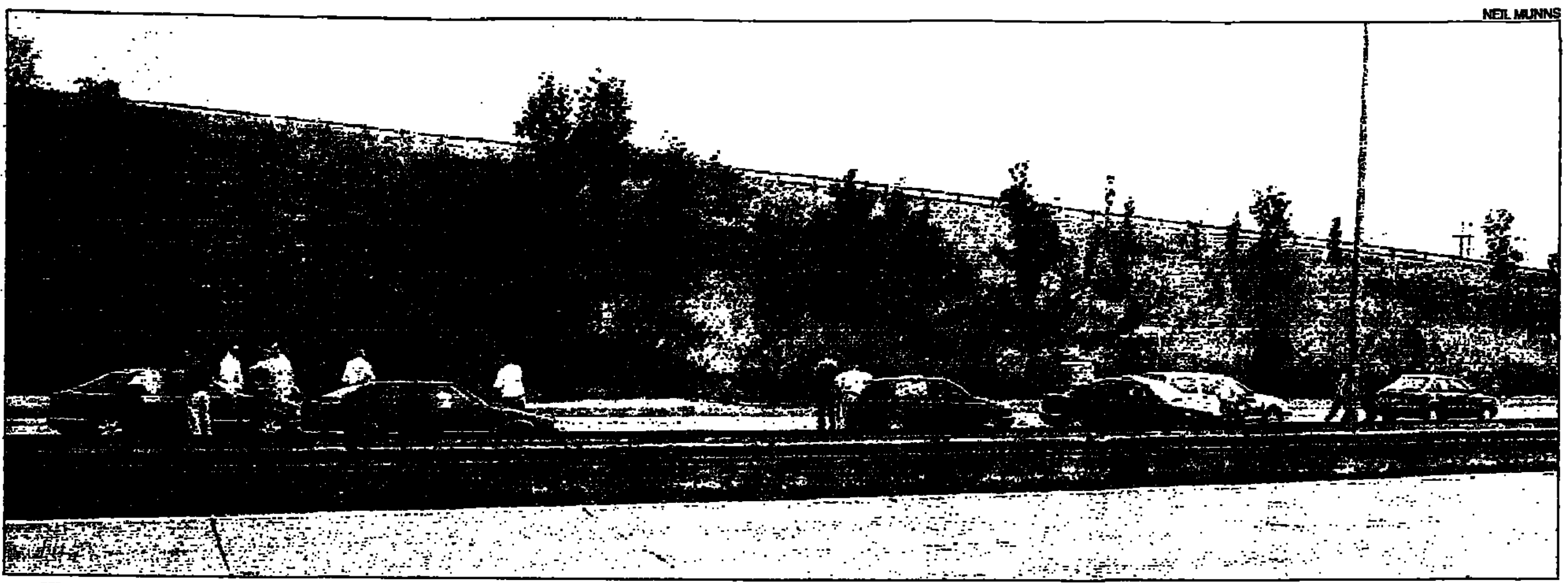


NEIL MUNNS

The scene on the M11 near Harlow yesterday after undercover police foiled a planned armed raid on a security van in Norwich. Four miles of the carriageway were closed

Armed gang arrested on motorway

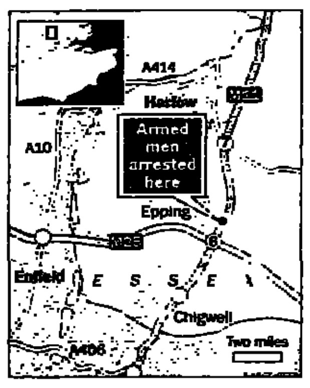
By Stewart Tendler
Crime Correspondent

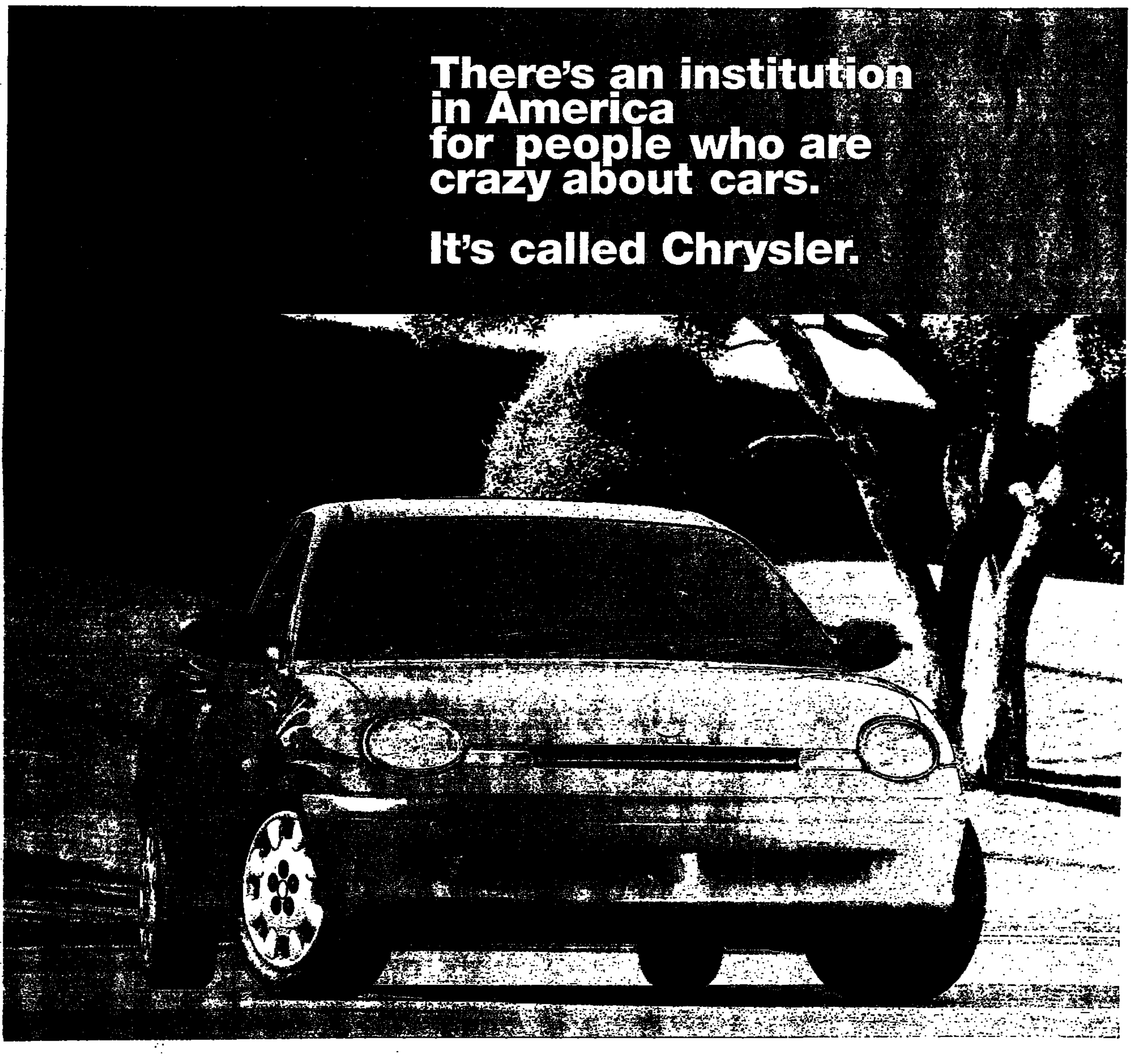
FOUR suspected armed robbers were arrested by police on the M11 yesterday after an undercover operation halted an attempt to rob a security van. A southbound section of the motorway between junctions 6 and 7 was closed for nearly three hours after three cars and a van were stopped by a team of nearly 100 officers from Scotland Yard and Norfolk police.

Police found four handguns and ammunition, but no shots were fired and no one was injured.

The four suspects were under surveillance as they left London yesterday and headed for Norwich in four stolen vehicles. They reached the target area still under observation but decided not to carry out the raid. Last night police would not say how the robbery had been disrupted but police may have asked for the van's deliveries to be cancelled or the vehicle took a different route.

The suspects then began driving back to London in convoy, followed by police in unmarked cars. They drove onto the A11 and then joined the motorway south of Cambridge. Armed officers and police helicopters moved in when they reached a stretch of the motorway close to the junction with the M25. Tailbacks of up to ten miles built up during the closure of a four-mile stretch of motorway south from Harlow. Last night the four suspects faced questioning about plans to rob the van in Norwich and other robberies in the London area. All four are middle-aged and come from the London area.

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- **All domestic & European flights to and from London Gatwick.**
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Jeddah	BA133/BA132
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Montreal	BA95/BA94
Detroit	BA97/BA96
Madras	BA35/BA36
Dhahran	BA129/BA128
Kuwait	BA157/BA156
Dubai	BA127/BA126
Peking	BA39/BA38

London Gatwick

Dubai & Colombo	BA2137/BA2136
New York (JFK)	BA2173/BA2172
Baku	BA2029/BA2028

Domestic and European flights to and from London Heathrow

Whilst we are making every endeavour to operate as many services as possible, we regret that some flights remain subject to disruption as we return aircraft to their normal operating positions.

For further details of flights operating this weekend and early next week, either:

1. **contact your travel agent or British Airways Travel Shop**
2. **look on ITV Teletext p.380 & p.381**
3. **visit our website at www.british-airways.com/strike**
4. **or call our information line 0800 727 800.**

Again, we would like to offer our sincerest apologies to any customers who are being inconvenienced by the industrial action. Rest assured that we are continuing to do all we can to keep disruption to a minimum. If your flight is affected, we will endeavour to organise alternative travel arrangements for you to reach your destination.

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Parents foot the bill as student debt rises by 25%

By John O'Leary, Education Editor

PARENTS are picking up a growing share of the bill for their children's higher education even before the Government's expected addition of £1,000 a year in tuition fees, according to a bank survey published today.

Annual research on students' finances by Barclays Bank shows that average debts have risen by a quarter in a single year. Almost nine out of ten students expect to owe money when they graduate, the average amount rising from less than £2,000 last year to almost £2,500.

With state support dwindling, parents are paying more than £400 million a year to help their children, on top of means-tested contributions to student grants. Three quarters of students said they received some money from their parents and for more than one in three they were the main source of income.

The finding comes less than a fortnight before Sir Ron Dearing is expected to recommend that students should pay fees of £1,000 a year or more, as well as meeting their own living costs. Ministers are likely to adopt the proposals to avert a funding crisis in universities and colleges.

However, today's report and a string of others illustrating student hardship will add to the pressure from student organisations and Labour MPs to preserve free full-time higher education. The National Union of Students said the figures showed that student debt was already restricting access for those from poorer families.

An NUS spokesman said: "It shows that students are simply not coping with the levels of debt they are being forced into at the moment — unless they have parents who can afford to help them. There is no doubt that asking students to repay tuition fees as well would deter large numbers from trying to get into higher education at all."

The Barclays survey shows that as students' maintenance grants have been cut, to be increasingly replaced by loans, reliance on parental support has grown. The average contribution is £631 this year, while other parents provided free food, help with travelling, or even the use of a car.

At the same time, the proportion of students saying they owed money to their parents halved, from 34 per cent to 17 per cent, suggesting that more parents were not expecting their children to repay them.

Fewer than 30 per cent of students now regard their local education authority maintenance grant as their main source of income. Two thirds now owe money to the Student Loans Company, with an average debt of £1,724.

In spite of their worsening financial position, fewer students were working during their summer holidays. However, more than 80 per cent intended to do so and 30 per cent had a term-time job.

Students themselves were saving more before going to college, aware of the financial burden they would face. This year, 58 per cent of first-year students went to college with savings averaging £1,137.

As awareness of debt rises, students are getting more resigned to it, the survey shows. Only 21 per cent were "worried, angry or concerned" about their debts, compared with 30 per cent last year.

The survey calculated average living costs for students in London and Manchester. After combined maximum grant and loan, the shortfalls for students in London ranged from £1,630 for a first-year living in a hall of residence to £3,428 for a third-year renting a house with three others. In Manchester, where the maximum loan is lower, the equivalent figures were £1,755, and £3,605.

CASE HISTORY

Loan heads for £4,000 despite aid from home

EVEN with debts of more than £3,000 and another year at university to come, Vicky Askew is grateful that she is a student now (John O'Leary writes). Paying tuition fees would have ruled her out of higher education.

The 22-year-old public relations student knew when she entered Bournemouth University that she was likely to go into the red: "Debt is part of being a student nowadays."

With no grant, she has had to rely on parents with debts of their own. Both she and her sister, Madeleine, are students, so the burden on the family after an expensive job-related move south is considerable. "I really don't like having to sponge off my parents," Vicky said. "There is no way I could have gone to university if it meant fees of £1,000 a year."

She has found Bournemouth expensive, with rent £10 a week higher than her sister pays in Northampton. After two years, she had borrowed £2,400 from the Student Loans Company and had a bank overdraft of £750.

For the past year, she has been on a work placement at the Institute of Internal Auditors, London, earning £8,000. But the capital's cost of living prevented her from reducing her overdraft. She hopes that will begin next month when she starts a summer job in a meat-packing factory near her home in Suffolk.

When she graduates in a year, she hopes to have only her student loan to repay. But that will be more than £4,000. "It will take a few years to pay off. I know people who are still paying five years after they graduated."

Malaysian Tom Cruise finds role at Newcastle

By Paul Wilkinson

SOUTH-EAST ASIA'S answer to Tom Cruise was yesterday completing the first steps in his other career, picking up an honours degree in architecture at an English university.

Back home Azhar Sulaiman has an estimated 80 million female fans, but for the last three years the Malaysian film star has mingled anonymously in the students' union bar at Newcastle University. Even the sight last winter of a television crew spending three months in the city making a soap opera of his fictional exploits as a Malaysian student abroad failed to stir much interest on Tyneside.

It was only when the hero of a string of romantic dramas visited the university stand at an exhibition in Kuala Lumpur that tutors realised his status. Terry McCarthy, director of Newcastle's international office, was amazed to see him mobbed by screaming teenagers.

He then learned that Mr Sulaiman broke the hearts of thousands of girls across South-East Asia three years ago when, at the age of 22, he suspended his film career after ten blockbusters to take his degree. However, their interest was kept up with 40 episodes of the soap opera *Cinta Antara Benua*, or *Love Across the Continents*, the adventures of Zack the overseas student. The series is shown in Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei and Indonesia.

Mr Sulaiman, who lives with his wife Chempaka, 26, in Gosforth, and hopes to combine the two careers, said: "I suppose my roles equate to a Hollywood star like Tom Cruise. I told people that I had done some acting, but no one realised quite how well known I was. It was nice to be able to just mix with the crowd. I saw no reason to make a big fuss."

The star: he appeared in ten films

IAN DUNCAN

The graduate: Mr Sulaiman after receiving his architecture degree

THE SUNDAY TIMES

THE TEMPEST

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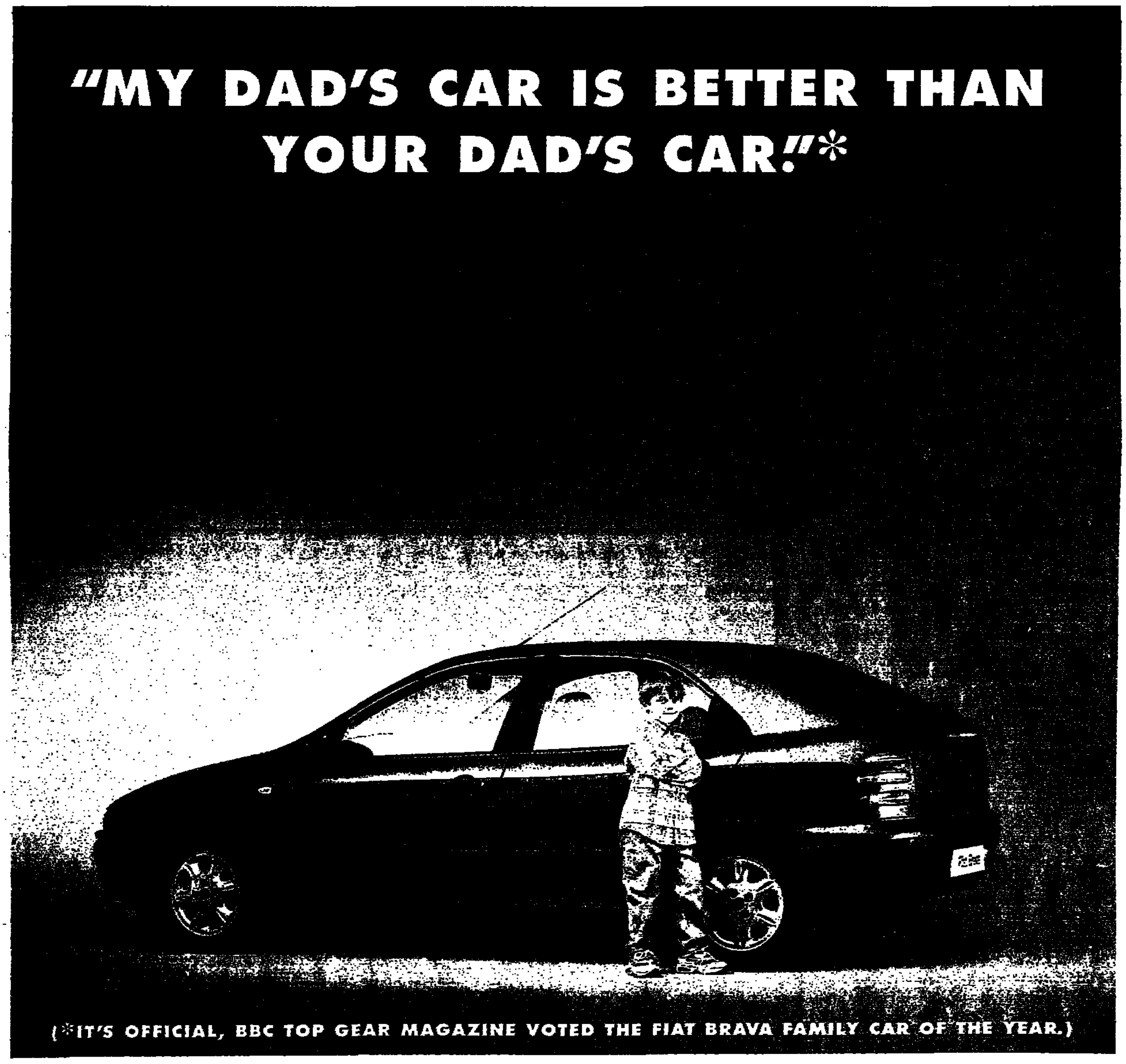
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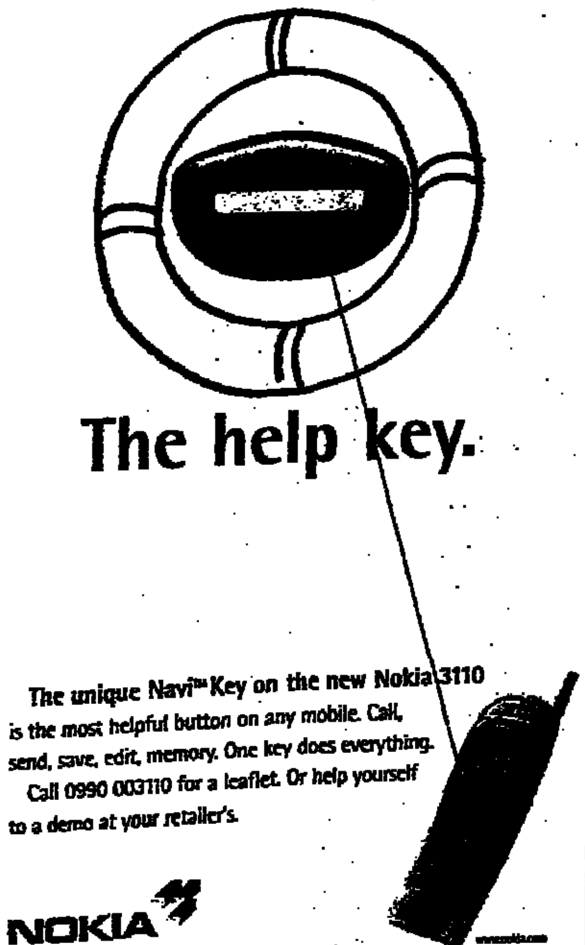

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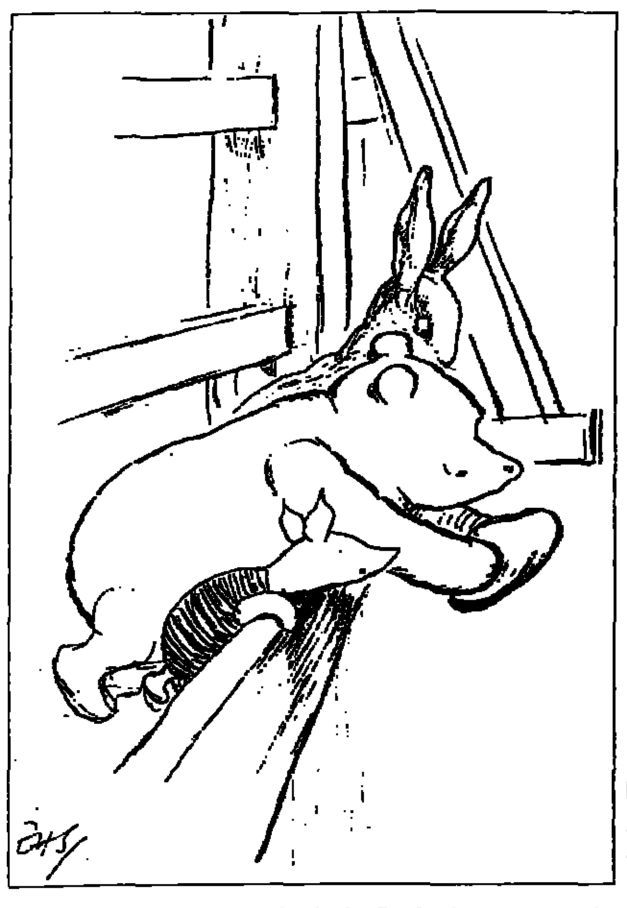

An illustration showing Winnie the Pooh playing at "Pooh sticks", captioned "I'm not throwing it, I'm dropping it, Eeyore", was one of two by E. H. Shepard for The House at Pooh Corner that fetched £67,500 each yesterday. Six of the artist's pen-and-ink sketches for A.A. Milne's Pooh books were sold for a total of £178,000, more than five times the estimated price, at auction at Christie's, South Kensington.

£15,000 for smudge that broke mould

A part of medical history will be preserved forever reports **Damian Whitworth**

A SMUDGE of mould nearly 70 years old was sold at auction yesterday. This was no common bathroom growth but a sample from the original culture in which Sir Alexander Fleming discovered penicillin in 1928. It fetched £14,950 in a lot with a photograph of Fleming in his laboratory and a medal commemorating the discovery.

The specimen, preserved under glass in a wooden box, was bought by the Science Museum in London and is to be displayed in an exhibition about penicillin. The museum had been prepared to pay more because of the specimen's importance to the history of medicine. "Fleming was the forefather of antibiotics and chemotherapy," a spokesman said.

The sample was given by Fleming to Douglas MacLeod, a gynaecologist colleague at St Mary's Hospital, Paddington. The men had been discussing developments in bacteriology and the constant struggle to ward off infections in the hospital canteen.

Fleming praised a new drug but then turned to his companion and said: "You know, Mac, I've got something much better — but no one will listen to me and I can't get anyone interested."

Dr MacLeod, nicknamed "The Hielander" by Fleming, later told a biographer: "I asked him what the substance was called. He said he had given it the name penicillin. He asked me to go with him to his laboratory. He showed me the mould and gave me a specimen."

Dr MacLeod kept the unusual gift until his death in 1970. It was sold at Christie's by his son, Rory MacLeod, 62, who said at his home near Wincanton, Somerset: "I'm delighted at the result. Fleming wasn't the best man to promote himself or his work, being a rather shy chap. Nobody would take any notice of him. But when he offered my father a sample, he accepted it and always kept it."

Fleming, born in Ayrshire in 1881, spent most of his career investigating the body's defences against bacterial infection but it was only late in life that he received retrospective fame for discovering penicillin in 1928. The breakthrough came when he noticed that mould which had contaminated a bacterial culture had destroyed the bacteria in its vicinity. He identified the mould as *Penicillium notatum* and named the antibacterial substance penicillin.

Although Fleming could not isolate or identify the antibiotic, he never lost confidence that penicillin would be stabilised and purified and rejoiced when Ernst Chain and Howard Florey accomplished this at Oxford 11 years later.

Manufacture was given top priority to cope with mounting war casualties and, as its efficacy became more widely known, Fleming was showered with honours. He died in 1955 and is buried in St Paul's Cathedral.

PA

Sir Alexander Fleming at work: this photograph was part of the auction lot

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Replica of stolen World Cup sells to mystery buyer

By John Shaw

A REPLICA of the World Cup sold for £254,500 yesterday at Sotheby's in London, well beyond the estimate of £30,000. It was bought anonymously.

The gilt bronze copy of the gold original was passed off as the real thing for two years before it was won by Brazil in 1970. The 13 in-high Jules Rimet trophy was stolen while on show at Central Hall, Westminster, in March 1966.

A few days after the theft Football Association officials commissioned a replica from Alexander Clarke, a firm of City silversmiths. But while preparatory work was going ahead the cup was found by a dog in bushes in south London. Four months later Bobby Moore held the cup aloft after England's win over Germany at Wembley.

It prompted worldwide demand to see the gold trophy kept in the jeweller's strongroom in Fenchurch Street. It was brought out up to ten times a week for official functions at Buckingham Palace, Downing Street, and at government departments.

Security was becoming a problem and to avoid a second theft it was decided that a replica should be made in bronze for display while the gold original remained in store. Work began again and the copy was completed in 1968. Brazil were entitled to keep the cup after winning the competition for the third time in 1970. But it was stolen a second time, never to be seen again, when it was taken back to South America. A new trophy was introduced in 1974.

The 1968 copy of the Jules Rimet trophy

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Espionage chief tells German spies to stop playing the game of the name

By Roger Boyes

GERMAN spies will soon be allowed to abandon their aliases and use their real names as part of a campaign of candour in the Munich-based Intelligence Service.

The plans for glasnost in the BND (Bundesnachrichtendienst), the German Secret Service, were unveiled at a staff meeting by the reforming intelligence chief, Hansjörg Geiger. When the decision is finally taken, some officers will probably be allowed to keep their false names, if only to avoid confusion in the classrooms of their children or raised eyebrows from neighbours.

The uncloaking of agents comes after similar moves towards cautious opening in other European intelligence services, including MI5, which has started to advertise openly for trainees. Dr Geiger's earlier position was as head of the German counter-espionage service in Cologne, where he presided over a public relations policy that included counter-spy T-shirts, computer games (Find the Spy) for children and active, on and off the record, briefings for journalists.

The BND, sometimes known as the banana-skin service because of its blunders, was always going to be a harder nut to crack. Since it was set up after the war by General Reinhard Gehlen — Hitler's top intelligence gatherer on Soviet military affairs — there has been a mantle of secrecy over the spy headquarters in Pullach on the fringes of Munich. Gehlen was never seen without sunglasses and used the alias Dr Schneider.

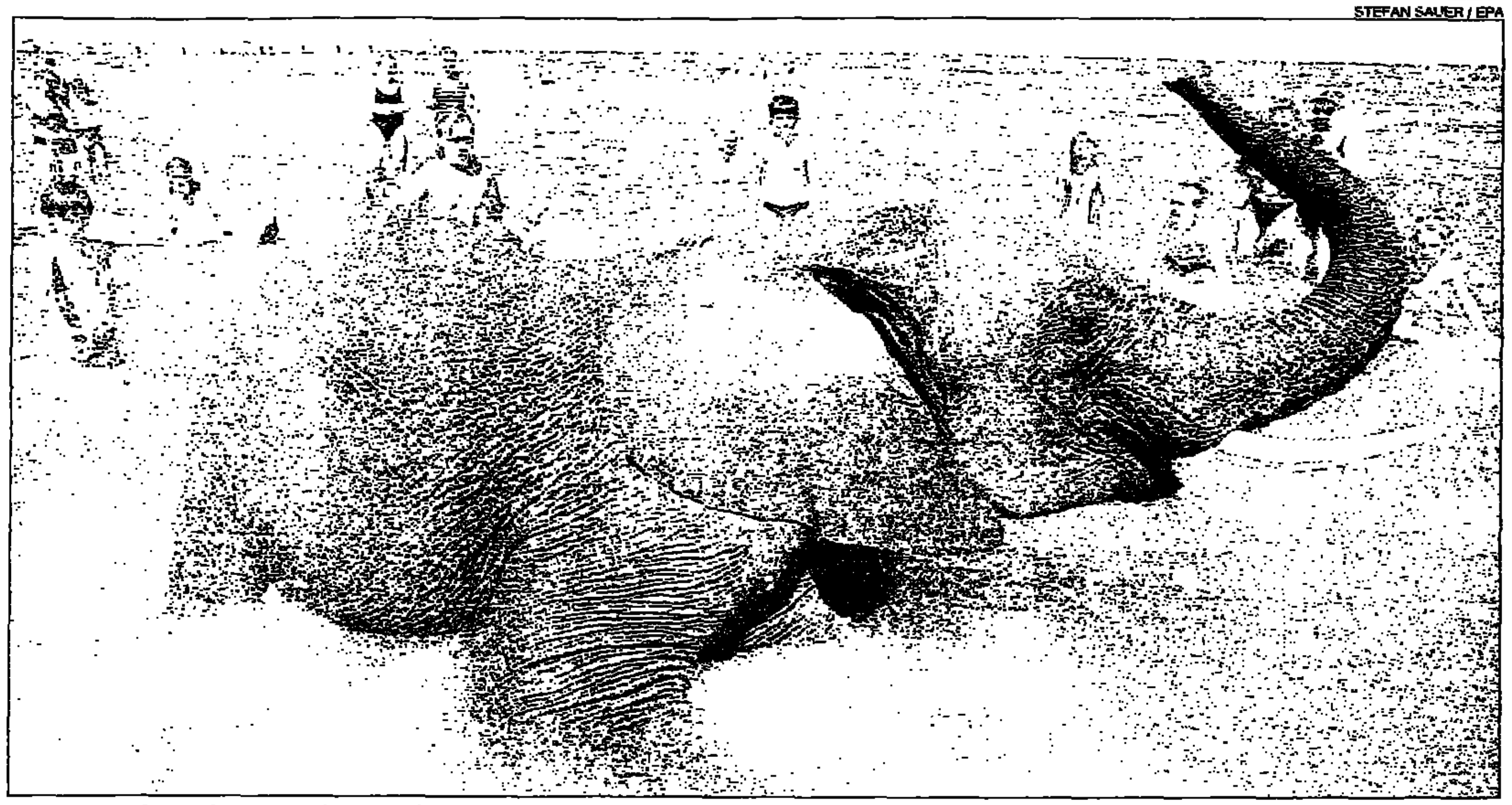
The first move of Dr Geiger (his real name) was to remove the plaque saying "Federal Property Administration, Special Section" outside the main gate and replace it with a big stone sign proudly announcing BND under a carved, alert-looking eagle. Journalists have been invited to an open day, briefed about global troublespots and encouraged to contact a jovial spokesman who goes under the cover name of Peter Juchatz.

More radical changes have been slow in coming. The BND still collects its employees in the morning with undercover buses disguised as regular buses. They draw to a halt 40 yards away from proper bus stops to ensure that no ordinary passengers get on board. The Secret Service is beginning to recognise that this is an absurdity: neighbours are naturally suspicious when clusters of men in trenchcoats wait on the pavement at 7.47 every morning; homeowners grumble about the unscheduled stops.

The bus "legend" follows from the principle that BND agents should be anonymous. When they enter the service they are given cover names selected from the Munich area telephone book. One year all new entrants were given Italian cover names. Inside the Pullach headquarters — originally built for Nazi leaders: Eva Braun, Hitler's mistress, once stayed there — agents know each other only by a second alias, a so-called "working" name. Staff from Departments I — Operational Intelligence — are never allowed to meet their counterparts from Department DIII (Analysis).

The rule that family members cannot be allowed to see the face of other BND agents has been strictly enforced. One agent from the International Terrorism Department (Section 16C) went on a works outing to a Bavarian brewery. He arranged for his wife to pick him up at the end of the excursion. The agent was reprimanded because his wife glimpsed the faces of his workmates. The agent was transferred to Open Information Retrieval — the room where newspapers are clipped. This is the espionage services equivalent of Siberia.

STEFAN SAUER / EPA



Daisy, a circus elephant, takes a bath in the Baltic yesterday watched by German children enjoying a dip at the resort of Ahlbeck on the island of Usedom. The elephant is one of the attractions at the Circus Aeros, which has pitched its tents in the nearby town of Bansin

Bonn insists budget hits euro bull's eye

Germany may be on course for one key Maastricht target, thanks to what critics call conjuring tricks, but other criteria are elusive, writes **Roger Boyes** in Bonn

THE German Government yesterday closed its ears to sceptical hoots from economists and the Opposition, and announced that it would fulfil precisely on target the public spending goal for economic and monetary union.

The promise came in a presentation by Theo Waigel, the Finance Minister, of a supplementary budget for 1997 and the regular budget for 1998. Much depended on growth, Herr Waigel said, but the current projection was for 2.5 per cent and "if anything it will have to be revised upwards". That, and a better than expected revenue flow from the 16 provincial states and from cities, would ensure that Bonn hit the 3 per cent of gross domestic product bull's-eye for public deficits.

Strict adherence to the 3 per cent figure has been denounced as "fetishism" by the French, but it has become part of Herr Waigel's credo as he strives to persuade Germans that the euro will be as strong as the mark. "Germany will fulfil the Maastricht deficit criterion," the minister said after the Cabinet approved the two budgets. Herr Waigel also made clear that Germany would be on target in 1998.

But the opposition Social Democrats — who described both the 1998 draft and the supplementary budget as "desperate measures" — said yesterday there was no way that a deficit of DM110 billion (£36.6 billion) could add up to 3 per cent of GDP. Norbert Walter, chief economist of Deutsche Bank, agreed, saying that the public deficit could be anything up to 3.5 per cent this year.

The supplementary budget, to patch rips opened up by unemployment, will require almost DM18 billion (£6 billion) in new borrowing. Since this is in violation of the constitutional principle that new borrowing must not exceed investment spending, the Government has had to declare an "exceptional unbalanced situation". The supplementary budget will have to be approved by the lower house. The 1998 draft will have to go through the whole parliamentary process, including the upper house, dominated by the Social Democrats.

Officials made clear yesterday that the new borrowing would not jeopardise Germany's progress towards meeting the Maastricht public deficit criterion. But it was now regarded as improbable that Germany would achieve another Maastricht goal: that of reducing total debt to 60 per cent of GDP.

Herr Waigel argues the total debt is so big only because of the specific conditions of German unification and promised yesterday it would be brought into line with EMU criteria by 2001.

As tipped earlier this week, the Cabinet gave the green light to the Eurofighter. Financing has now been agreed up to 2001 and, with pre-production investment in place, there are now no serious obstacles to the jet. This will come as a relief to Britain, Italy and Spain, which had been unable to begin work or embark on serious contracts because of the uncertainty in Bonn.

Parliamentary approval for the Eurofighter is expected in October — despite a few sceptics in the Free Democratic Party and the hostility of the Social Democrats and the Greens. Contracts for 180 aircraft would be signed soon after the parliamentary vote.

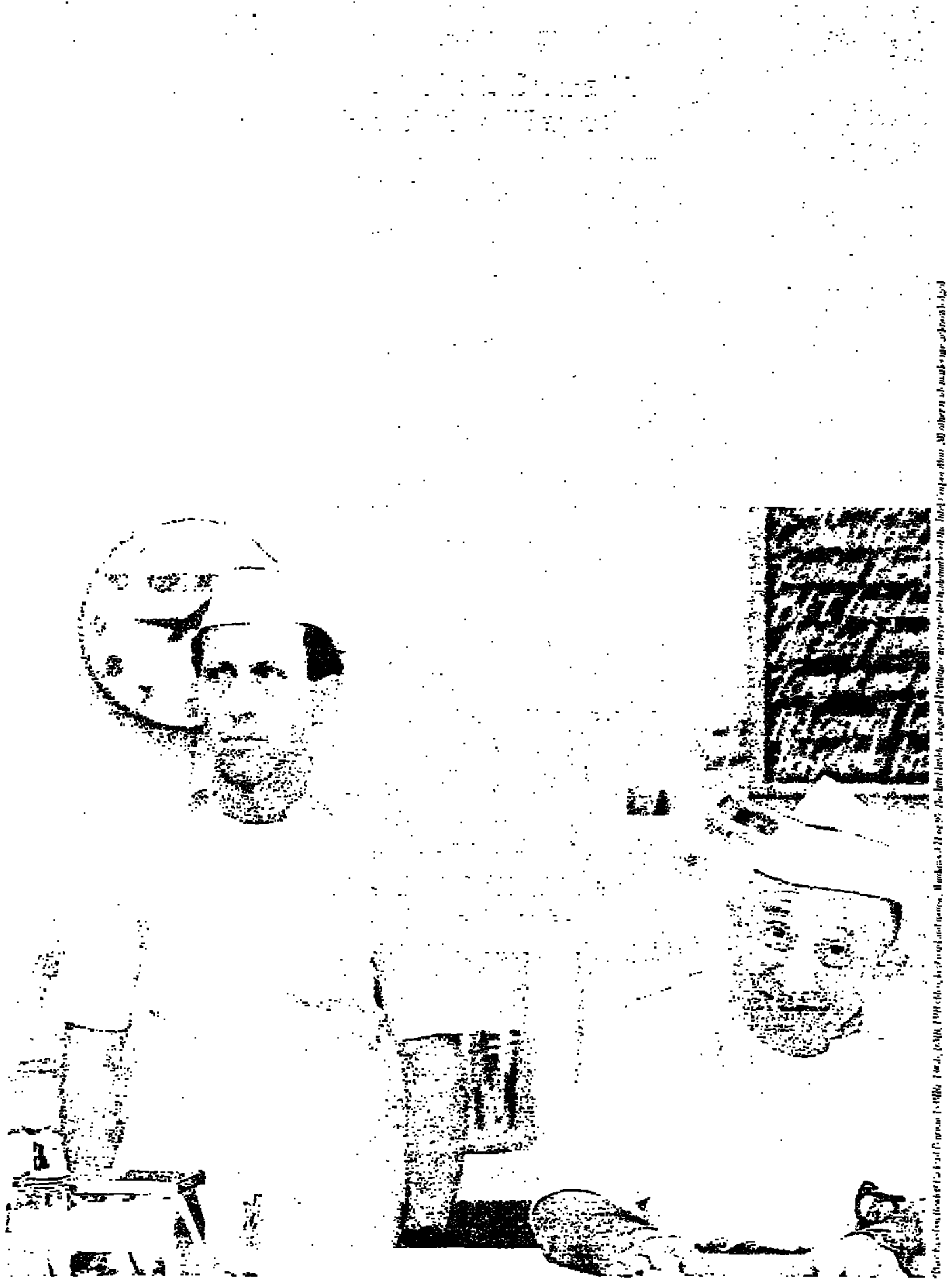
The main reaction to the budgets yesterday was that they were a piece of conjuring. The assumption that unemployment will drop quickly because of stronger growth seems to rest on shaky foundations and there is disagreement about what level of growth will be needed to make a dent on the 11.4 per cent jobless rate.

One of Herr Waigel's cutbacks was aimed at job creation schemes. The minister says growth will be 2.5 per cent this year, 2.8 per cent next and stabilise at 2.5 per cent until the turn of the century. Yet so far the growth is generated almost entirely by the export orders of big companies who are continuing to lay off workers.

A truer picture of the confused condition of Germany's public finances came with the Cabinet decision to sell off Germany's entire strategic reserve of crude oil — 7.3 million tonnes — by late 1999 to cut the budget deficit.

Waigel: budget attacked as "desperate measure"

British jobs boost, page 28



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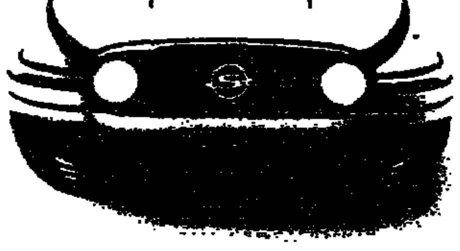

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Bishops 'knowingly ordain gay clergy'

By Ruth Gledhill
Religion Correspondent

MANY bishops have knowingly ordained or employed practising homosexual clergy, even though this goes against Church of England policy, a survey is expected to disclose tomorrow.

The survey, by the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement, is being published as the General Synod prepares this weekend to debate homosexuality. Bishops and clergy, concerned that the synod is becoming obsessed with single-issue politics, are trying to minimise the impact of the debate.

However, their pleas are likely to go unheard by protesters expected at the synod as the battle lines are drawn for Monday's debate on a 1991 bishops' report, "Issues in Human Sexuality", which sanctioned committed relationships between the homosexuals in the laity but ruled them out for clergy.

A motion from the Archdeacon of Wandsworth, the Ven David Gerrard, will ask the synod to commend the report for discussion and acknowledge that it is not the final word on the subject. The bishops have already said that they will block any amendments to the motion. Nor do they want to alter the Church's stance, established in 1987, that homosexual genital acts should be met with a "call to repentance" and that heterosexual marriage was the ideal.

However, many bishops quietly acknowledge that a cleric's sexuality need have little bearing on their ability. There are dozens of practising gay and lesbian clergy operating successful and valued ministries.

The Rev Nick Holtham, vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields, London, said the Church must now recognise that an individual's attitude to homosexuality was not a fundamental matter of faith or core test of Christian orthodoxy. Mr Holtham, writing in yesterday's *Church Times*, says the most serious problem facing the bishops is that they have made it impossible for practising homosexual clergy to contribute to the debate because they are supposed not to exist.

"I have been to the licensing of a priest who was known to the bishop as a homosexual living with his partner. In this service, the bishop declared that the priest was a man of 'sound morals'," he said.

"I have been to another service for a priest in which another bishop, usually identified as a traditionalist, expressed sympathy to the priest's family and particularly to the priest's same-sex partner. It is not surprising that those who are fiercely opposed to a tolerance of homosexuals within the Church distrust those bishops who appear to say one thing and do another."

The Right Rev Richard Harries, Bishop of Oxford, who chairs a working group appointed to follow up the earlier report, said it was not true to argue that the Church would never change its mind on the subject, but said that the Church was not about to do so immediately.

The United Reformed Church has decided that men and women in active homosexual relationships can become serving ministers if their local church does not object. At its assembly in Portsmouth this week, it agreed that such a relationship would not be grounds to reject a candidate for training.

PROMOTION OF WOMEN PRIESTS

A motion calling for the promotion of women priests to be bishops has been tabled to the General Synod — by one of their leading opponents. The Rev Geoffrey Kirk, a traditionalist who is secretary to the Forward in Faith group, which opposes women priests in the Church of England, has put down a private member's motion this weekend calling for the consecration of women bishops "without delay". This, he says, is because the synod must recognise that women bishops "are a necessary and inevitable consequence of the ordination of women." Supporters of women priests are threatening to boycott the motion, which they say is "mischievous". The ordination of women priests was approved five years ago.

At Your Service. Weekend, page 11

SIMON SCHLUTER

David Gerrard, right, in a televised debate on gay clergy yesterday

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Credo

We all have a role in God's soap operas

The Bible, as we know it, hardly existed before the invention of the printing press in the 16th century. The Church did not evangelise and teach through books and pamphlets but by images, pictures, and stories told in family and community life.

Medieval mystery plays exemplified this approach to education and in the larger centres were mounted on epic scale, with sophistication and civic pride. The plays followed quite closely the biblical stories of creation and redemption, with an underlying theme of the parallel encounters of human and divine, good and evil. The initial vision of creation overflowing from the superabundance of God degenerates into a conflict which can be resolved only by God Himself as He makes His journey into the far country, to Bethlehem and Calvary.

Stories are a highly adaptable artistic form. The basic story can be re-told in fresh ways, to which a contemporary audience can readily relate. Original sin can be expressed by road rage or the lonely bustle of urban life, alongside the traditional picture of the forbidden fruit. The wise men — representing the homage of the world at large to the newborn King of the Jews — can assume modern secular guises. The shepherds can be portrayed with latter-day working class overtones.

The new cycle of Chester mystery plays brings old and new interpretations together in a creative way, in a powerful performance. The woodenness and triviality of so much presentation of the Christian faith is enlivened by the series of sermons-in-stories which the sequential scenes of the mystery plays represent.

Christianity makes a drama out of a crisis, with the Son of God as the chief actor on a human and cosmic stage. When well scripted and acted, the mystery plays bring the story alive — much as Alec McCowen did in his renowned stage performance of St Mark's Gospel. Just as he insisted upon the Authorised Version, so the best adaptations of the mystery plays retain a recognisable medieval dimension, woven together with modern themes and illustrations. Radio, television and associated media are taking us back towards the Middle Ages. Illiteracy is rising, and those who can read and write now rarely bother, or need to do so. We are entertained by that form of storytelling known as soap operas. In such a cultural context, mystery plays seem curiously avant-garde, communicating the Christian faith with freshness.

Mystery plays invite the audience to become caught up in the plot as it explores the great issues of life and death. Beauty and enlightenment go hand in hand. They tackle the biggest subject there is, but in terms of day-to-day life. They are about, and encompass, you and me. By cajoling and warning, by educating and amusing, they invite us on to the stage.

Peter Forster

☐ *The Right Rev Peter Forster is Bishop of Chester.*

☐ *The Chester mystery plays will run daily on the cathedral green until Wednesday.*

Drinkers get beer facts of Christian message

CHURCHMEN are turning to drink to attract new members (Paul Wilkinson writes). A travelling band of preachers are using beermats to advertise their impending arrival.

The mats, which advertise the Through Faith Mission, are printed with passages of Scripture and Christian symbols such as the Cross. The group, based in Cambridge, is walking round Britain, talking to customers in pubs. Tim Hall, the mission spokesman, said: "The whole basis is to reach out to people beyond the church and we are targeting people in pubs. The mats seem to work quite well."

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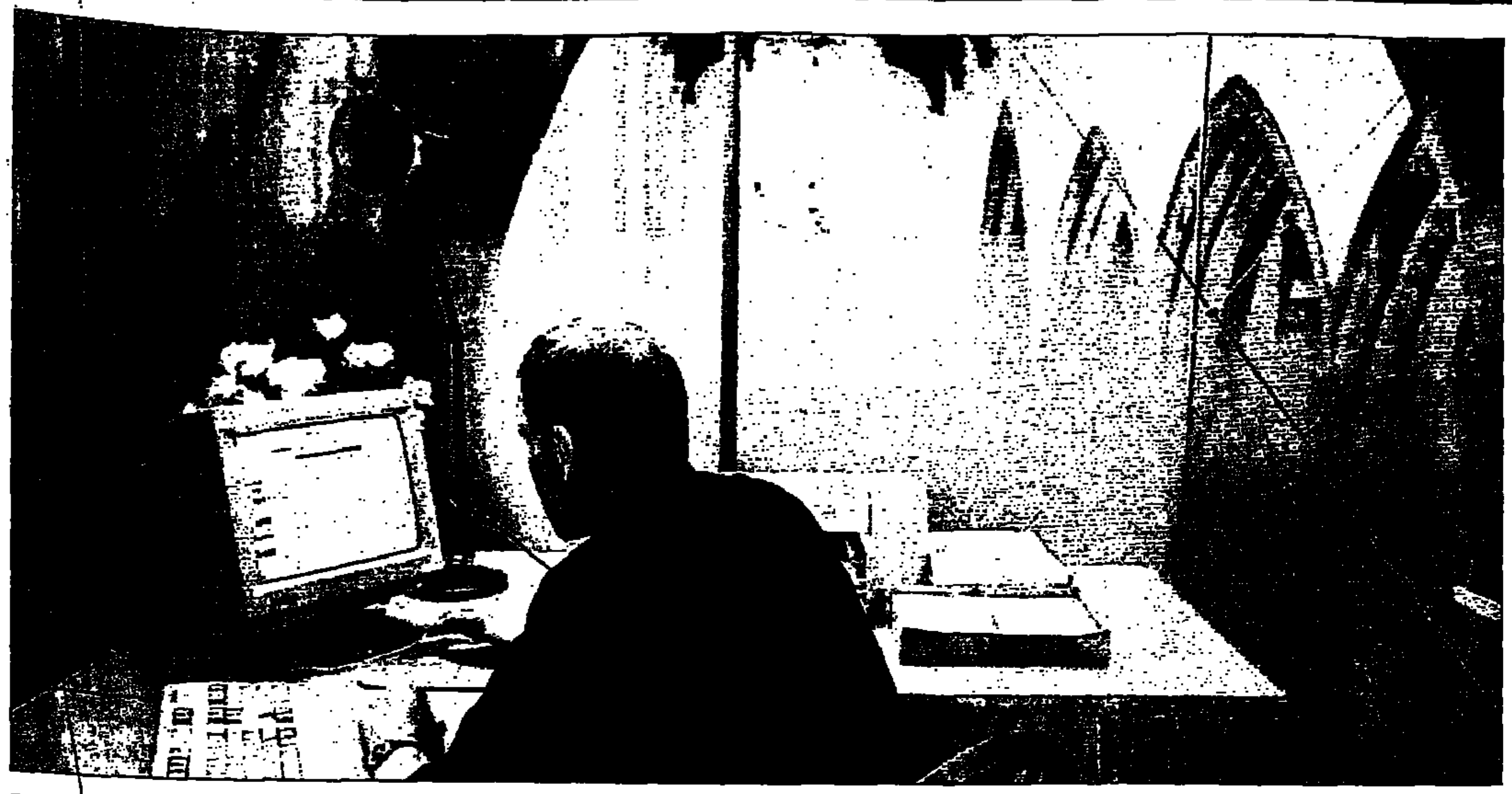

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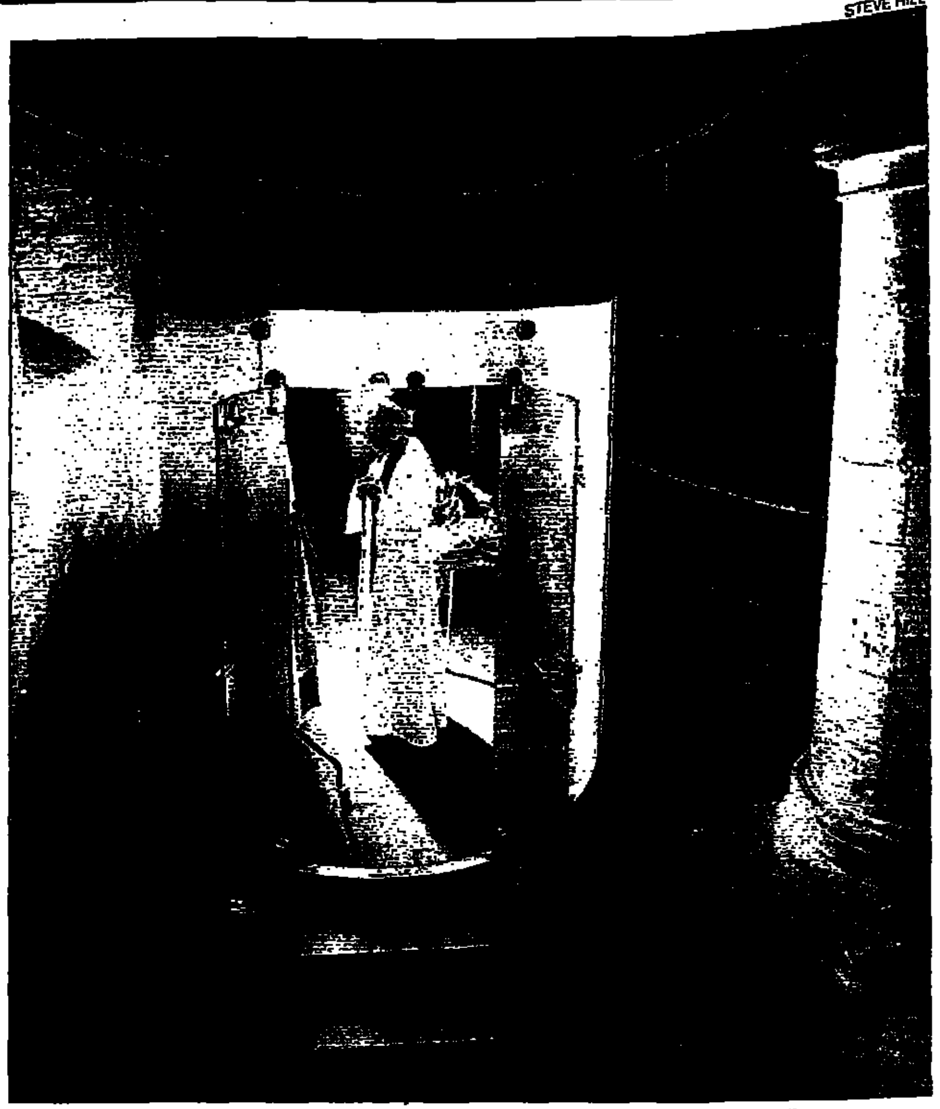

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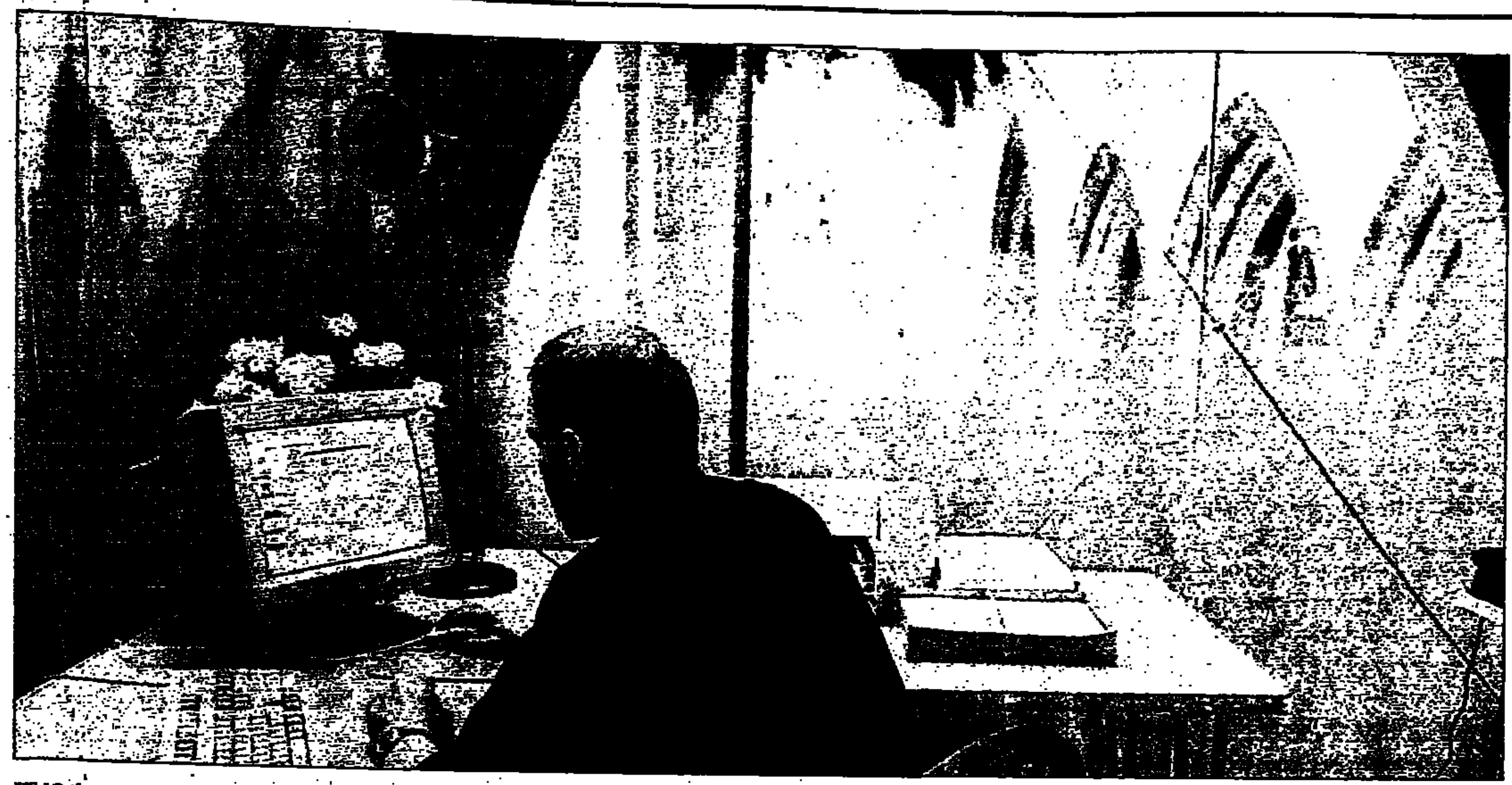

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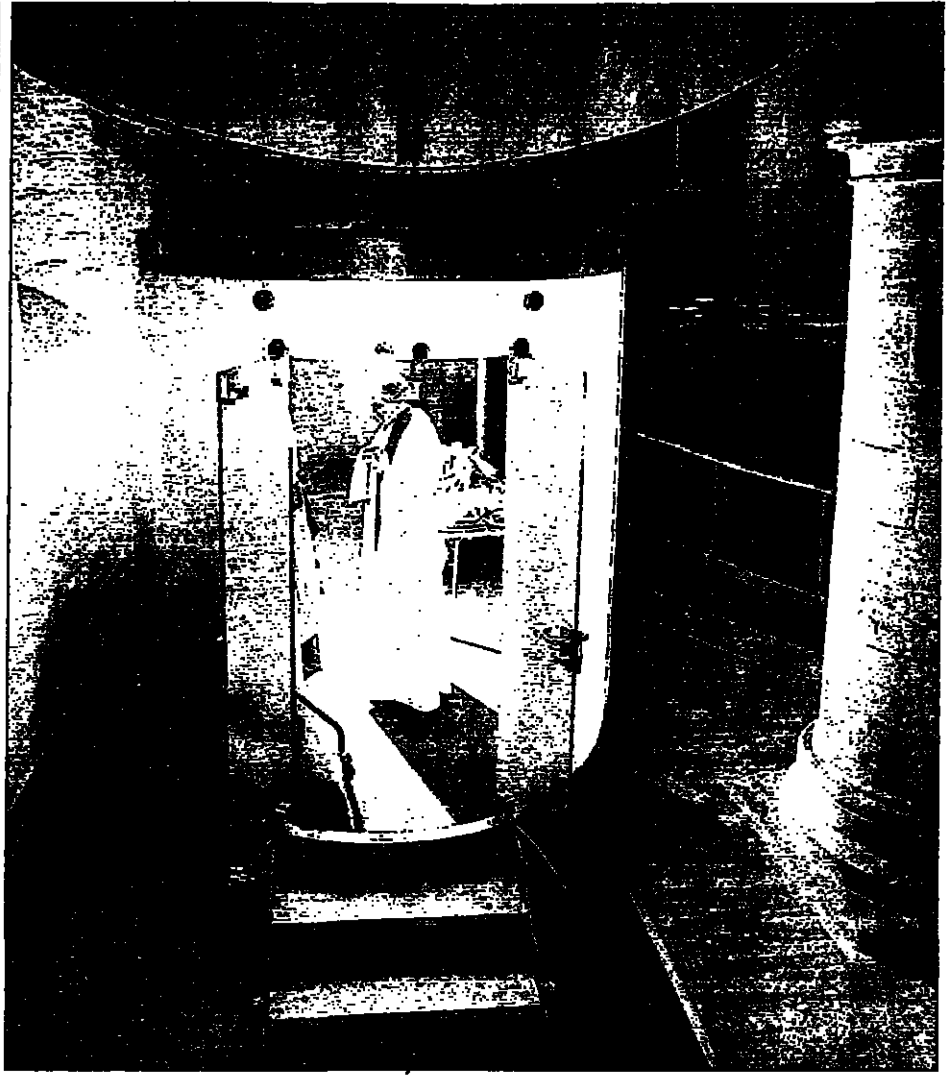

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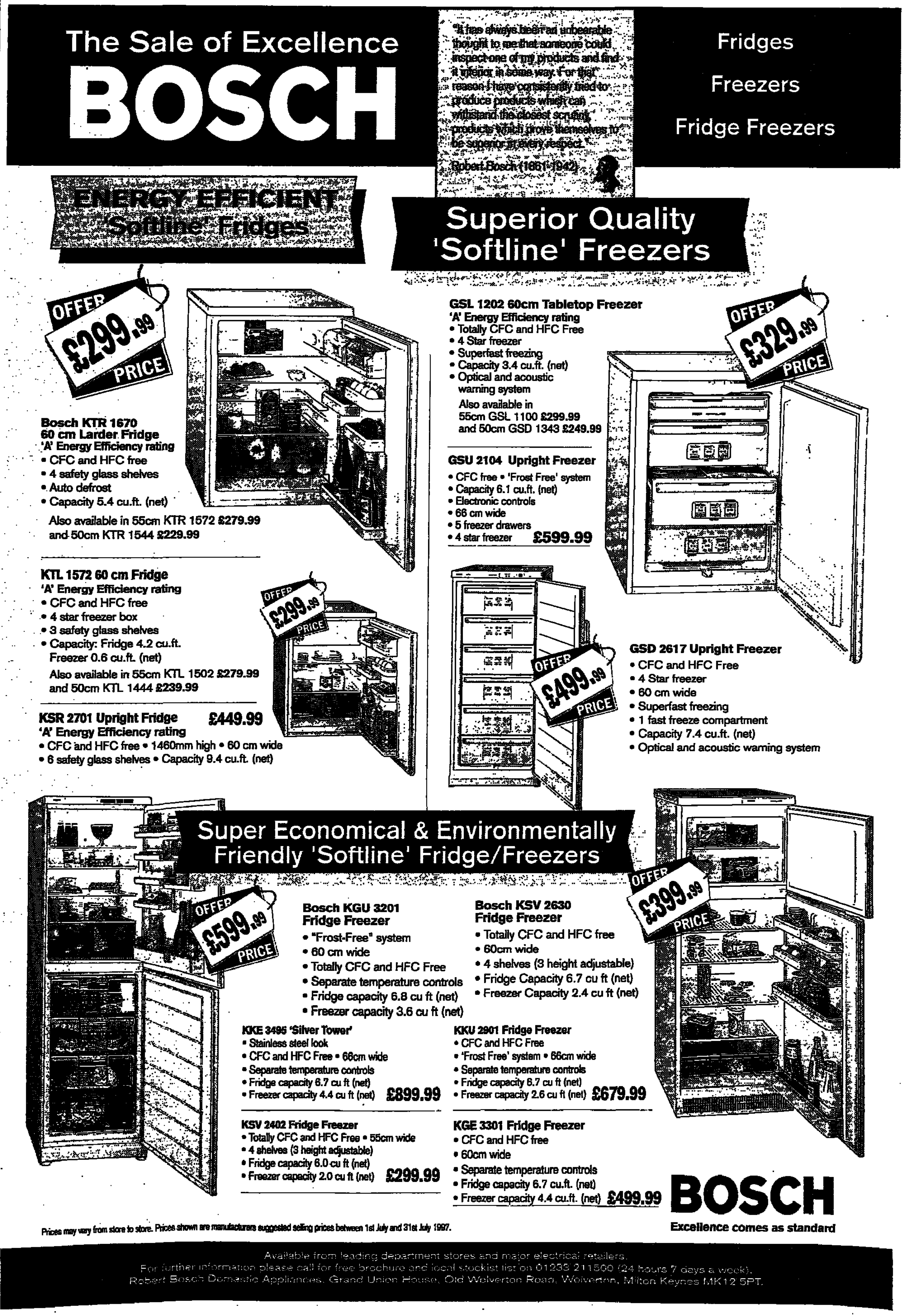

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Oil battle looms at Alaska sanctuary

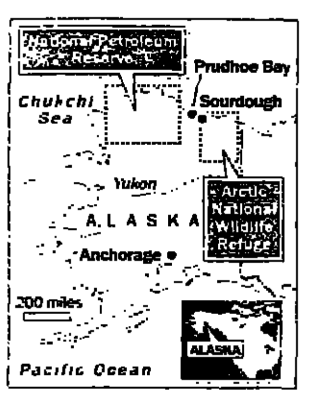
FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

THE British oil company BP is at odds with the US Government and environmentalists over the discovery of oil beside the last great sanctuary for Arctic wildlife in Alaska.

The tussle is a warning of the pressure building on Washington from oil companies and the state of Alaska. They want to open potential oilfields in the frozen north on a scale not seen since the development of Prudhoe Bay 30 years ago.

The strike by BP and Chevron is at a site called Sourdough on state land just a mile from the border of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. This all but confirms that there is oil under the refuge, a federal preserve. The moment BP and Chevron announced their find last March, Bruce Babbitt, the Secretary of the Interior, declared that the Administration was firmly opposed to any drilling within the refuge.

Since then, battle lines have been drawn. Environmentalists have emphasised the importance of the refuge, a fragile ecosystem of 19 million acres, teeming with an extraordinary diversity of life. Migratory residents include more than 180 bird species, new families of musk oxen reintroduced after being hunted to near-extinction, pregnant polar bears seeking dens and a herd of 150,000 caribou. All would be too nervous to withstand the advance of mankind with drilling rigs.



While barring oil exploration in the refuge, Mr Babbitt wants royalties for any oil taken out of Sourdough, on the ground that much of it will really be oil from under the refuge that has seeped across the border. BP says Mr Babbitt must first prove that it comes from the refuge. To do so, according to BP, he must drill in the refuge. That would require an Act of Congress and was out of the question, replied Mr Babbitt.

Paul Laird, BP's spokesman in Alaska, said the company could drill as close as 500ft to the refuge, but he did not know how the Government could prove there was recoverable oil on its side of the fence without drilling a well.

John Leshy, a senior adviser to Mr Babbitt, disagreed. He said that drawing oil from under a neighbour's land was a common practice and there were well-known procedures for deciding compensation short of drilling.

"We're at an impasse," said a spokesman for Tony Knowles, Alaska's Governor, who supports development of Sourdough if BP and Chevron decide it is commercially viable.

About 80 per cent of Alaskans are pro-oil. One compelling reason is that each of them receives at least $1,000 (£600) every year from an oil fund. Another is that oil's lucrative jobs will be threatened when Prudhoe Bay is tapped out.

Mr Knowles and the oil companies contend that the US is too dependent on foreign oil — 52 per cent of consumption was imported last year. They argue that oilfield technology is now far kinder to Alaska's environment.

But oilfields still cause unacceptable pollution, says the Natural Resources Defence Council, a private group advocating improved fuel economy. Its research shows that 900 million barrels might lie under the wildlife refuge. That would meet America's needs for 51 days.

OLEG POPOV / REUTER

President Clinton, with President Constantinescu of Romania beside him, points enthusiastically to the crowds gathered to welcome him yesterday at Bucharest's *University Square*. Mr Clinton told the huge throng that

Clinton hails Romanians

he will help to secure their country a seat in the Nato alliance if they continue to *embrace democracy*. "Stay the course! The future is yours!" Mr Clinton implored in a speech that drew prolonged applause. Speaking in a square symbolising the bloody stand against communism, Mr Clinton held out the hope that Romania will be invited in the next round of Nato expansion. "The door to Nato is open." Mr Clinton said. "And we will help you walk through it." *(Reuter)*

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WORLD IN BRIEF

Cook in Moscow talks on security

London: Robin Cook leaves tomorrow for Moscow for two days of talks expected to consolidate Labour's political and security relations with Russia as Britain prepares to take over the presidency of the European Union as well as the leadership of the Group of Eight (writes Michael Binyon, Diplomatic Editor).

On his first visit as Foreign Secretary, Mr Cook will hold talks with Yevgeni Primakov, his opposite number, which are expected to focus on Russia's relations with the European Union and East-West security after the acceptance of three new applicants for Nato membership.

Mr Cook will also have talks on growing security co-operation between London and Moscow. Britain has been disturbed by the growing influence of Russian mafia gangs overseas, and suggestions that mafia leaders are attempting to buy property in Britain for operations abroad. Trade is the other main topic of the two-day talks.

Mistake mars rover's day

Pasadena: The Mars rover became stuck against a rock, depriving controllers of a day's data from the Pathfinder mission because of a two-minute miscalculation, scientists said. The spacecraft missed an instruction to turn on its radio receiver for orders on overnight manoeuvres. The signal was to be re-sent, and the rover and a camera on the mothership were expected to resume operations. Meanwhile, the rover was left immobile, with one of its six wheels halfway up a 22lb rock which scientists have dubbed Yogi. *(AP)*

Confidence vote survived

Vienna: Austria's Foreign Minister, Wolfgang Schüssel, right, survived a confidence vote brought by the three small opposition parties over reported derogatory comments about several foreign leaders. Herr Schüssel, well known among Austrian reporters for making blunt remarks to journalists, had strenuously denied making any of the comments, which allegedly included calling Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, "an aging Bette Davis". *(AP)*

Boy killed in Pakistan feud

Karachi: The mutilated body of a ten-year-old boy who was strangled with a rope was found dumped in bushes in Karachi's crowded Lines district (Zahid Hussain writes). He was the fourth boy killed over the past three days on suspicion of being an informer for rival political factions or police. The murder of young boys is the latest twist in the political violence and revenge killings in Pakistan's commercial and financial capital involving the Mohajir Qaumi Movement and the dissident Haqiqi faction which have left more than 250 dead over the last four months.

Aids virus came from a kiss

New York: Health officials have reported the first documented case of the Aids virus being transmitted through kissing (Tunku Varadarajan writes). A woman is thought to have acquired the virus from deep kisses with a man who was HIV-positive. However, the report, released by the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, emphasises that the virus was apparently transmitted by blood from the man's rotten gums, not by his saliva alone.

Woman hired shoplifter

St Paul, Minnesota: A wealthy dentist and his daughter were acquitted of hiring a shoplifter to steal such luxuries as Baccarat crystal, Armani suits and Polo sportswear, but the man's wife was convicted on a felony charge. Gerald Dick, Judy Dick and their daughter — Stacy Zehren, a Chicago attorney — were accused of paying a thief to go into Dayton's department store and steal the items. The jury decided that the wife tried to buy designer goods worth $7,000 (£4,100) she knew were stolen. *(AP)*

Ten die in Bombay statue riot

Bombay: At least ten people, including two children and a woman, were killed when police opened fire on a crowd protesting here at the desecration of a social activist's statue, police said. They said trouble started when a statue of Bhimrao Ambedkar, a revered leader of the lower social classes, was found garlanded with shoes, viewed as an insulting gesture. The protesters were fired on after they set fire to lorries, a Maharashtra state minister said. *(Reuter)*

China's soldiers of fortune

Beijing: Chinese soldiers stationed in Hong Kong are to get a pay rise of 900 per cent. China has been forced to up the meagre mainland salaries of troops garrisoned in the former colony — about £4 a month — to help them cope with exorbitant living costs. They are now to get between about £35 and £43 a month, about nine times what their counterparts on the mainland receive, the *Weekly Digest* said. *(Reuter)*

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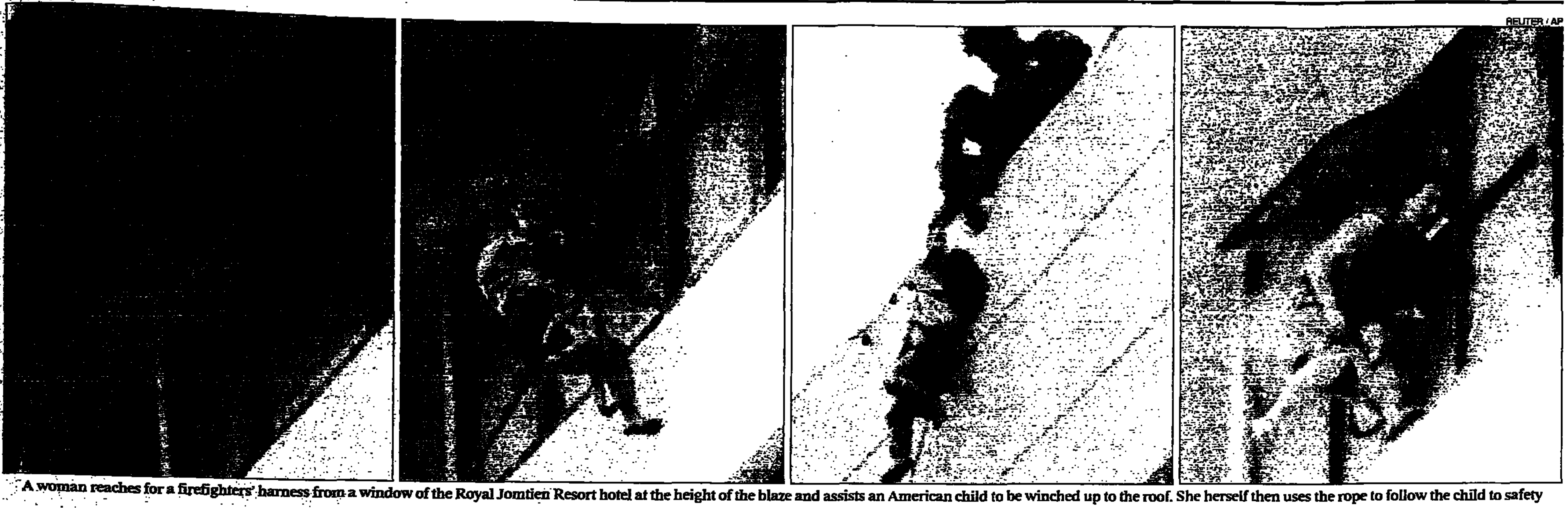

REUTER / AP

A woman reaches for a firefighters' harness from a window of the Royal Jomtien Resort hotel at the height of the blaze and assists an American child to be winched up to the roof. She herself then uses the rope to follow the child to safety

Tourists saved as 80 die in Thai hotel fire

FROM ANDREW DRUMMOND
IN BANGKOK

MORE THAN 80 people died of burns and suffocation and 64 were injured after being trapped in a blazing hotel in the Thai beach resort of Pattaya-Jomtien yesterday.

In horrifying scenes several guests leapt to their deaths to avoid flames as others were snatched to safety by firefighters lowering ropes from the roof.

Most of the guests died where they were trapped as the hotel's fire alarm and fire sprinklers failed to operate, and several fire doors were reported to have been locked. This may have been to prevent guests sneaking away without paying their bills, Bangkok's Channel 7 television claimed.

The 16-storey Royal Jomtien Resort, owned by a Thai business consortium, became a towering inferno after a fire in a wok being used by a cook in the first-floor kitchens set off a series of gas explosions from gas canisters stored near by.

First to die were those trapped in the kitchen. Next came more than 20 of 80 workers attending a Thai Electricity Authority conference above. Among the early casualties were foyer and office staff, including the hotel manager and the chief cashier, who was the daughter of the owner.

Guests had no warning as the fire enveloped the hotel's foyer and office area and flames, accompanied by thick, billowing smoke, started shooting up lift shafts and stairwells.

Scores of cars parked in the hotel's underground car park began exploding, fuelling the blaze. Late last night fire and rescue officials were still bringing charred bodies out of the wreckage.

Suchart Pachinman, the provincial Governor, called for an immediate inquiry and all hotels in the area to be inspected. Checks would be made today to see what equipment was working and what doors were locked.

The fire broke out in the kitchens soon after 10.40am when the cooks were preparing breakfasts for some of the late risers. If it had started earlier, the death toll would have been higher as guests would have been asleep in their beds.

David Rice, Britain's honorary consul, visited the scene and was last night checking three hospitals in the area where the injured had been taken. So far, however, despite the resort being popular with British tourists, there are no reports of Britons among the casualties.

An American guest, aged 38, was in her room on the 15th floor with her 11-year-old daughter when she realised something was wrong. Her rescue was dramatically captured on film as she was pulled up by rope by firefighters who had landed by helicopter on the roof. "I realised there was a fire because I could smell the smoke. I phoned downstairs, but they said 'do not come down at any cost. Stay where you are'.

"It was not possible to leave the room because the fire was raging below. There was smoke everywhere outside. I soaked a towel and put it under the door and managed to call a friend on a handphone to tell him of our predicament," she said. "We waited and waited. The smoke became very bad. I cannot say how grateful I am for the helicopter and the fireman who came to lower down a rope.

"There was no warning of the fire. No alarm. There was no alarm from smoke detectors, no working sprinkler system. Nothing. No notification at all."

Last night the owner of the Royal Jomtien Resort was not available to comment. He was in Bangkok — a two-hour drive away from the blaze scene — and was described as too shocked at the death of his daughter to visit the scene.

Deposed Cambodian leader pleads for US intervention

BY BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON AND DAVID WATTS

AMERICA is withdrawing 40 diplomats and their families from Cambodia and has urged other Americans, estimated at between 1,000 and 1,300, to leave immediately.

A number of Britons left Phnom Penh yesterday on aircraft of the Royal Australian Air Force, and Japan has, for the first time since the war sent military aircraft into Thailand to pick up its nationals.

In protest at the deteriorating situation, the United States has already suspended aid to Cambodia for at least 30 days. Prince Norodom Ranariddh, ousted as Cambodian First Prime Minister at the weekend, arrived in Washington yesterday to plead for intervention to stop his country's hopes of peace and prosperity slipping away.

On the fifth day of his shuttle round the globe to muster opposition to his rival, Second Prime Minister Hun Sen, he was due to meet Thomas Pickering, Assistant Secretary for Political Affairs. He was expected to call on the United States and the United Nations not to recognise any government emerging from the weekend coup.

On Thursday in New York, after talks with the UN Security Council president, Peter Osvald, the Prince said he had also asked the council to appeal for mediation in the crisis.

In Cambodia, denying that he had carried out a coup, Hun Sen said that the Prince was not banned from returning, but said that he would be put on trial if he did.

Beilin: Britain suited to role in region

Israeli negotiator urges Britain to initiate new peace process

BY MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

THE Israeli architect of the Oslo accords said yesterday that the US had all but abandoned the Middle East peace process, and called on Britain to step in and lead a new European-sponsored package.

Yossi Beilin, the Opposition's foreign affairs spokesman, said the Americans "have just left some phone numbers for us to call when things start moving again". The situation was now explosive: for the first time since 1991, no talks were going on anywhere and extremists were gaining ground.

Mr Beilin called for a new package including a freeze on Israeli building at Har Homa, outside Jerusalem; agreement on a further Israeli interim withdrawal from occupied territory; and the beginning of talks on a final settlement.

He said the level of mistrust between the Palestinians and Binyamin Netanyahu's Likud Government was so high that neither side would even consider a plan put forward by the other. A new international mediator was needed.

Britain, he said, was ideally suited for this role. It had long experience and deep knowledge of the Middle East. It would hold the presidency of the European Union next year and lead the foreign policy troika. "This could be a mission for the British presidency," he said. After talks with Robin Cook, he said Britain had not jumped at the idea "but nor did they throw me out of the window".

Mr Beilin said he could not guarantee that the Netanyahu Government would accept a British-led initiative. He thought the Palestinians would do so, however. Unless talks started again soon, "the room for misunderstanding is so big that violence is almost inevitable".

THE SUNDAY TIMES

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ANC ready to eat humble pie for sake of deal ending Inkatha feud

Having made peace with the whites, President Mandela could bolster his status by befriending Chief Buthelezi, but the price may be heavy, writes **R.W. Johnson** in Johannesburg

ALMOST miraculously in the eyes of many South Africans, the country appears to be on the verge of an historic peace deal between President Mandela's African National Congress and Chief Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party.

Since 1980 the two parties have been involved in a fratricidal struggle which has left 12,000 dead in South Africa's most populous province, KwaZulu/Natal, and which has sometimes led to fighting in the townships and hostels around Johannesburg.

The agreement, being considered by the two parties' high commands for ratification will, if effective, bolster the country's political stability and bring greater investor confidence.

The news that such an agreement could be close has taken observers by surprise, because Inkatha's recently published proposals seem to leave much ground to be covered. Inkatha demanded that guarantees had to be given to the Zulu chiefs who are its key basis of support, that the ANC make whatever arrangements are necessary so that KwaZulu-Natal's own provincial constitution — previously struck down by the constitutional court — should nonetheless be put into place, and that the ANC take measures to help to erase the bloody past.

It also wants a new body to replace the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in KwaZulu/Natal and says wrong-doers should be handed over to the courts. It is difficult to see how the ANC can concede such demands without this being read as an admission that the commission has a pro-ANC bias.

The Inkatha Freedom Party has also demanded public apologies from the ANC for its "vilification" of Chief Buthelezi in the past, a formal recanting of President Mandela's statement to the UN Security Council in 1992 that the Inkatha was a mere "surrogate" of apartheid, and an apology for the murder of more than 400 Inkatha leaders and the identification of their killers. In addition, Inkatha wants a commitment to help to develop the old Zulu capital, Ulundi, and an agreement on a common programme for the future.

Many of these requirements would be rejected by ANC activists, especially those in KwaZulu/Natal, though observers have noted that the various demands for apology are ultimately merely requests for words and are, as such, easier to meet than more practical concerns. Such a deal would, however, bring considerable relief to the hard-pressed ANC, under pressure as a result of the economy's slowdown in growth and the extreme unpopularity of its free market economic policies with its own left wing.

A peace deal with Chief Buthelezi, even if it means conceding him permanent power in KwaZulu/Natal, would replace left-wing support with reinforcement from the centre and would set the seal on the process of national reconciliation so dear to President Mandela's heart. Having made peace with the whites, Mr Mandela could then complete his presidency by finally reaching an agreement between two of South Africa's largest black groups.

☐ Cover-up claim: South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission yesterday drew up a subpoena for Winnie Mandela to force her to answer questions about her activities in Soweto in the 1980s (Inigo Gilmore writes).

Amid accusations of a cover-up involving access to Katiza Cebekhulu, a key witness living in Britain, investigators admitted they may be unable to get "conclusive evidence" about her alleged crimes. Mr Cebekhulu is apparently the man who can allegedly link the President's former wife to the deaths of four youths in 1991.

Leading article, page 23

Opposition says revolution has begun in Kenya

From Sam Kiley in Nairobi

KENYA'S Opposition yesterday claimed to be at the start of a revolution, and vowed to disrupt elections later this year if the Government blocks political reforms.

Ten MPs led by James Orengo, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in parliament, said there would be no elections without reform of colonial-era laws, which have been used to break up political rallies and deny prominent campaigners such as Richard Leakey the right to form political parties.

At the end of a week of demonstrations which left up to 14 people dead, mostly victims of police bullets and clubs, Mr Orengo said: "The mood of the country is that there is a beginning of a revolution. The flame of change is flickering throughout this country."

The opposition MPs likened the changing mood among Kenyans to the revolution which drove Mobutu Sese Seko from power in Zaire.

Given the rivalries between several tribally based opposition parties, there is little chance that the "flame of change" will become a forest fire. But the crushing of demonstrations on Monday and Wednesday has isolated President Moi and sparked the most significant mass movement for reform he has faced since inheriting the presidency from Jomo Kenyatta in 1979.

Twenty-two countries — including Britain, America and Japan, Kenya's biggest donor — have condemned police violence, which included the teargassing of worshippers inside Nairobi's All Saints' Cathedral and the beating of a Presbyterian Moderator.

The IMF threatened to suspend a loan of $280 million (£166 million) to Kenya over the Government's refusal to prosecute businessmen and officials involved in a scandal in 1992 that cost Kenya £300 million — 10 per cent of gross national product.

The moves have enraged Mr Moi, 73, who has attacked Britain and other Western countries for "interfering". In his first comment on the upheavals in Nairobi and other cities, he said foreign governments "have no moral authority to tell us to do what they don't practise at home. It is up to us to choose the type of democracy we want".

After bowing to international pressure to allow multiparty elections in 1992, President Moi has reneged on promised reforms and appointed hardliners to his Cabinet in the run-up to elections later this year.

Chief among the hardliners is Nicholas Biwott, who Scotland Yard detectives said they most wanted to interview in connection with the murder of Robert Ouko, the Foreign Minister, in 1989. Mr Biwott was recently appointed Minister with responsibility for "internal security".

Such moves have convinced opposition leaders that widespread civil disobedience may be the only way to force Mr Moi to accept reforms. "Kenyans should ensure by all necessary means at their disposal that the general elections are not held before reforms are effected," Mr Orengo said.

His demand won the support of Protestant and Roman Catholic organisations.

Sierra Leone is excluded

SIERRA LEONE has been suspended from taking part in Commonwealth meetings, following the military coup in May, it was announced yesterday by the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group, which monitors the democratic credentials of member states. (Glen Owen writes).

MARK EARTHY / REUTER

Johann Magnussun, a Swedish wine connoisseur, tests the bouquet of a 90-year-old bottle of champagne in Stockholm yesterday. It was one of about 5,000 bottles of vintage champagne — identified as a

Find puts fizz in history

1907 Heidsieck & Co — and stores of cognac and fine wines that have been salvaged by a consortium after lying on the Baltic seabed since the ship carrying them was torpedoed in October 1916 by a German submarine. The Swedish ketch *Jonkoping* was carrying supplies for the Russian Tsar's army when it was attacked by U-boat 22. It had left the Swedish port of Gavle bound for Finland and St Petersburg. Sweden was neutral in the war. *(Reuter)*

FBI looks again for Alabama bombers

From Tunku Varadarajan in New York

FEDERAL agents have reopened their investigation into the 1963 bombing of a Baptist church in Birmingham, Alabama, in which four young black girls died and 14 others were seriously injured.

The bombing, which marked a turning point in the American civil rights movement of the 1960s, is widely regarded as being the worst single crime of the troubled era.

Although most people were convinced that the attack was the work of the Ku Klux Klan, only one man was charged. Evidence that he had at least three accomplices was ignored repeatedly by J. Edgar Hoover, the Director of the FBI.

It is believed that he feared an investigation would expose FBI moles in the Klan, and that a widescale conviction of klansmen would play into the hands of his sworn enemy, Martin Luther King, the leader of the civil rights movement.

Although the FBI denies it, the reopening of the case is due largely to the pressure provoked by a new film on the 1963 bombing, called *Four Little Girls*, by Spike Lee, the radical black director. The film was released in America earlier this week.

The man convicted of carrying out the bombing, Robert Chambliss, died in prison in 1985, aged 81. He never admitted his guilt.

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Bosnia Serbs accuse SAS snatch squad of 'assassination'

Peacekeepers are under attack after the operation to capture war crimes suspects, **Tom Walker** reports from Prijedor

THE Bosnian Serb disinformation machine swung into action yesterday, claiming that British SAS units assassinated Simo Drljaca, the indicted war crimes suspect, and that his colleague, Milan Kovacevic, had been taken by troops posing as Red Cross workers.

Liljana Karadzic, head of the Republika Srpska Red Cross and wife of the Bosnian Serb leader, wrote a letter condemning the SAS action to the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva. In Prijedor, a crowd of 2,000 protested in front of the town hall before marching on the local British troop command centre, shouting "Ustasha! murderers!" and demanding the return of Dr Kovacevic.

Momir Talic, the commander of the local Krajina corps of the Bosnian Serb Army, has accused the British troops involved of "cheating" the local population, and warned that the excellent relationship built up by the Stabilisation Force (Sfor) in the region could be in jeopardy. Mr Talic said his "scouts" had closely monitored the build-up to Operation Tango, and knew that SAS units had been brought in from outside. In Prijedor it is even rumoured that local Serbs were used by the SAS to track Mr Drljaca. The government newspapers in Banja Luka were also unsparing in their criticism. "The occupiers killed him," ran the headline in *Glas Srpski*, and *Vecernje Novosti* said simply: "Nato hunts Serbs". The truth appeared to be a casualty of the furore surrounding the SAS action, the first time Nato troops in Bosnia have struck against suspected war criminals. Once again, Bosnian Serbs feel they are being victimised, and there was dark talk of retaliation against foreigners.

What seems certain, however, is that Nato has been economical with details in its account of Thursday morning's fatal snatch operation. Two elderly peasants living opposite the lake where Mr Drljaca died, spoke of their terror as British helicopters hovered and dropped smoke-bombs yards from their house.

"I thought the war was starting again," said Mira Bulic. "There was smoke and so much shooting. I didn't dare to look." Radio Prijedor, a notorious agent of "ethnic cleansing", claimed four helicopters had hovered above Mr Drljaca's lakeside trailer, while 20 troops jumped from four vehicles; two of them military, and ordered him outside. Mr Drljaca emerged in his bathing suit, it said, and ran for the beach, about 30 yards across a picnic area.

"They fired automatic weapons and he fell," said Zoran Baros, the station's editor. "A soldier went over to him and shot him twice in the head." Speaking in front of a portrait of Radovan Karadzic, Mr Baros said the Prijedor police had collected the fateful bullets from the shingle, and had photographic evidence proving the slaughter of a defenceless Serb about to enjoy a morning's fishing.

"If they are capable of going into a hospital posing as the Red Cross, then they are capable of this," he said. "How can it be such a problem for 20 soldiers to take on one man?" The track leading to Mr Drljaca's lakeside hideaway passes the haunting lands of his darkest deeds. A gravel lane winds past the village of Omarska and the remains of its notorious concentration camp, and then on past the Lubija opencast mine, where the mainly Muslim inmates of Omarska were churned in heavy machinery and buried beneath lime. If he had reached the war crimes tribunal in The Hague alive, Mr Drljaca would have been questioned over his involvement in up to 5,000 deaths and disappearances.

> ‘They fired automic weapons and he fell. A soldier went over and shot him twice in the head’

It is an eerie landscape of rusting machinery and redundant railyards, nestled amid the folds of rolling Serb pasture. An Orthodox church stands just yards from where Mr Drljaca fell; on the shingle two wreaths of flowers and candles marked the spot. Small patches of the pebbles and grit were stained dark with blood; Mr Drljaca's trailer had been removed, again by the Prijedor police. "What the soldiers did to him was a sin against God," said Mrs Bulic's sister Bosiljka, echoing a familiar theme on the streets of Prijedor, where Mr Drljaca was described by many as an upstanding citizen, a family man and patriot.

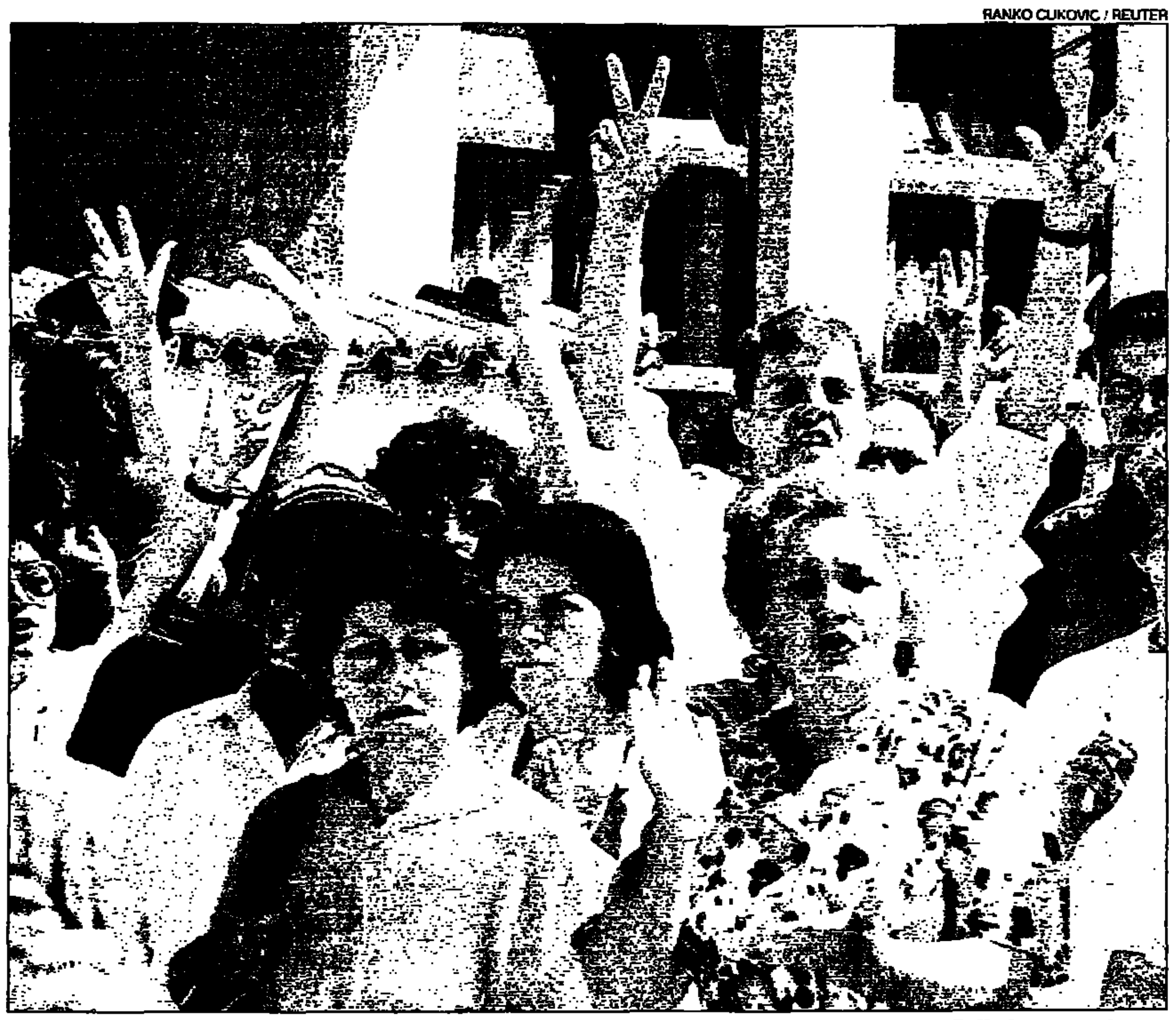
Attracting equal controversy is the raid on Prijedor hospital. Dobrila Rodic, Dr Kovacevic's secretary, described on Radio Prijedor how three uniformed men and one in civilian dress had arrived bearing a parcel from the "Red Cross in Belgrade".

Mrs Rodic said that, as she opened the door to Dr Kovacevic's office, one of the uniformed men drew a pistol and pushed her aside. She said the man's two companions then brought out their pistols and dragged out Dr Kovacevic, pushing him down the corridor and into a waiting van with no registration plates. The man in civilian clothes was described as speaking good Serbo-Croat, and may not have been British.

☐ **Moscow:** Russia yesterday condemned the British military's operation in Bosnia, and accused London of jeopardising the Dayton peace agreement (Richard Beeston writes). The Russian Foreign Ministry said that, as a member of Sfor, it refused to share any responsibility for the action. "The apprehension of suspects is not included in the mandate of multinational forces," it said.

Letters, page 23

RANKO CUKOVIC / REUTER



Bosnian Serbs give victory salutes during a protest outside the Stabilisation Force offices in Prijedor yesterday

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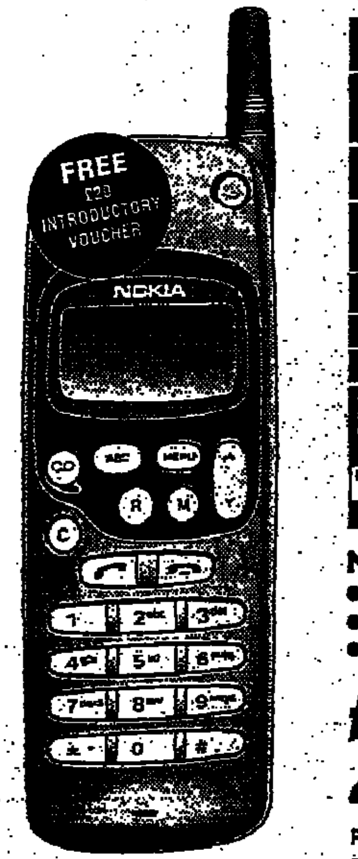

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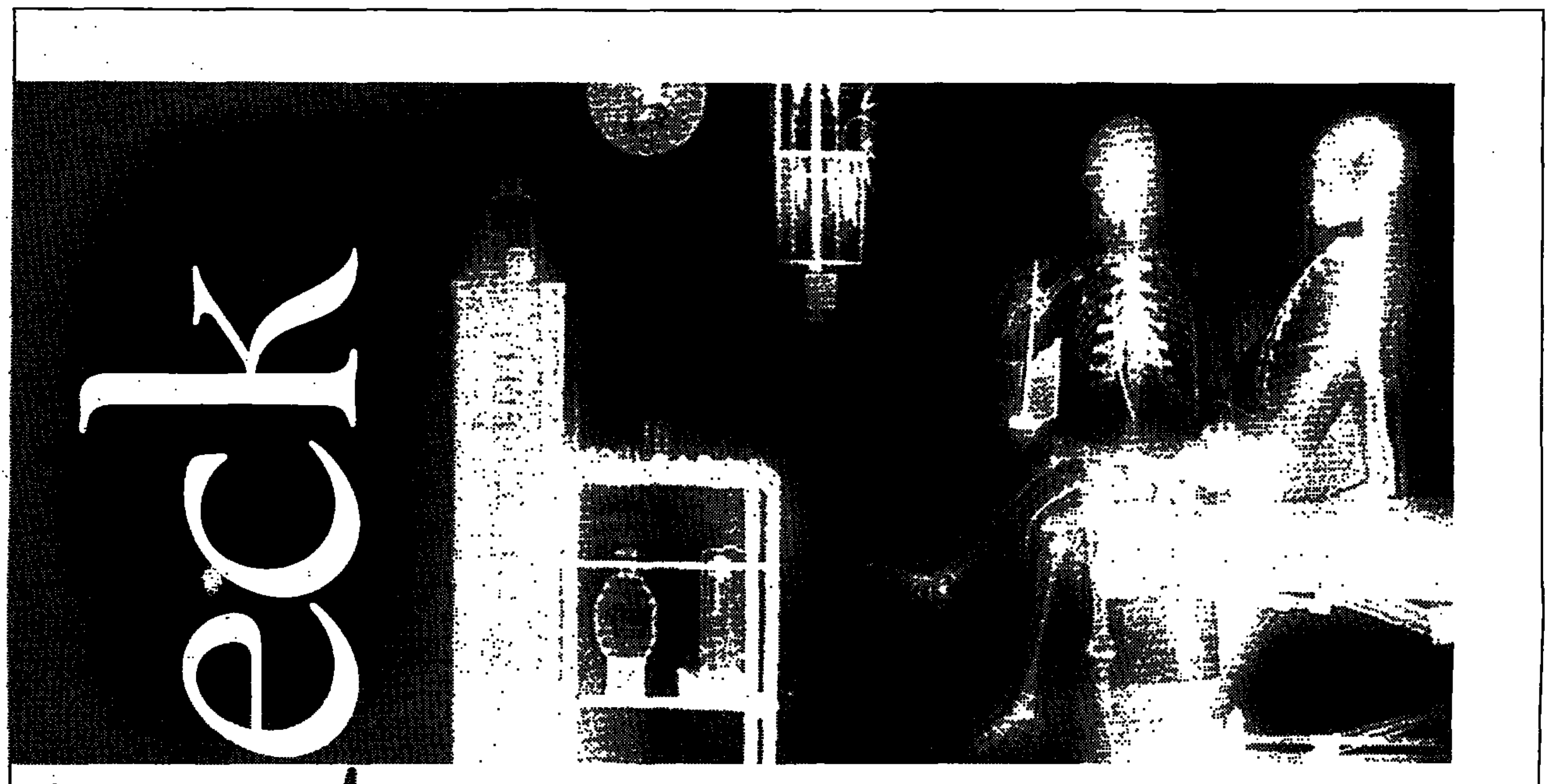

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Refusal to give MS victim new drug was illegal

By Michael Horsnell

A MAN with multiple sclerosis yesterday won his legal battle against a health authority that refused to fund his treatment with a new drug prescribed by neurologists.

North Derbyshire Health Authority's attitude towards Kenneth Fisher, from whom it withheld supplies of beta-interferon costing £10,000 a year, was disingenuous and unlawful, Mr Justice Dyson said at the High Court.

He ordered the authority to introduce a lawful policy and reconsider within 14 days its decision to deny the treatment. Mr Fisher, 33, was not in court. After the hearing, his father Ian, 59, said he was pleased with the judgment. "My son is poorly now. He has got to the stage where he is dependent. He wasn't that 18 months ago. He has been denied the drugs and that is where the deterioration has come." The family, from Dronfield, Derbyshire, are to take legal advice on whether to sue the authority. Kenneth Fisher's mother Margaret said: "I am just upset that it has taken so long."

The health authority was ordered to pay the costs of the action, estimated to be several times the annual cost of treating an MS sufferer. The judge said that it knowingly failed to apply national guidance in an NHS circular and also knew that its own policy amounted to a blanket ban on funding treatment of local MS sufferers.

He said that unacceptable and inconsistent excuses were given in an effort "to hold the line and hang on to their unsustainable position". Creative constraints had been applied to withhold funding, including the excuse that the authority would provide funds for only those patients involved in a national clinical trial of the drug.

The 14-day deadline followed a submission by John Grace, QC, that Mr Fisher's condition had deteriorated since being refused the drug 18 months ago, and that the time factor could be crucial. The court was told that Mr Fisher, who is unable to work, was diagnosed with MS in 1987 and that if he had lived only a mile further north, in Sheffield, he would have had no difficulty obtaining it.

Although the health authority had set aside funds and promised treatment, Mr Grace said that the decision to deny Mr Fisher had been taken for purely financial reasons. The judgment will force North Derbyshire to "reconsider" its policy and to pay for Mr Fisher's treatment if consultants judge that he would still benefit.

North Derbyshire Health Authority said that it would review policy and identify possible sources of increased funding. A spokesman said: "We have a preferred policy to support drugs and treatments with proven positive clinical outcomes."

Margaret and Ian Fisher at the High Court yesterday

Other patients will pay price of court ruling

By Ian Murray
Medical Correspondent

PATIENTS throughout the country will suffer the consequences of yesterday's High Court ruling.

To pay for beta-interferon, health authorities will have to save money elsewhere. One senior official said: "It will be a case of robbing two Peters to pay Paul."

Stephen Thornton, head of the health authority group of the National Health Service Confederation, said that treatment with the drug would become a priority. "We know that multiple sclerosis sufferers can benefit from this but because it is so expensive we can only provide it if we stop treatment for others. That is the sort of horrid dilemma we are facing."

Mr Thornton is chief executive of Cambridge and Huntingdon Health Authority, which was heavily criticised recently for refusing to fund treatment for a child with cancer, Jaymee Bowen. He said that particular decision had been taken on medical grounds but added: "Unless we get a 3 per cent increase of funds in real terms every year these very difficult decisions are going to get worse and worse. The Budget gave us an extra £1.2 billion but even that does not provide the 3 per cent we need."

Beta-interferon is a genetically modified interferon — the protein that protects against viral infections. In some illnesses, including MS, these natural proteins are misidentified, attacked and destroyed by the immune system.

The drug helps to prevent the body's immune system from attacking itself. It has to be kept refrigerated and the patient injects it every other day. It is not a cure and works best with patients who suffer relapses of spasm followed by periods of remission. Although it could benefit about 10,000 MS sufferers in Britain, only about 1,000 are being treated with it.

The NHS Executive issued guidelines to health authorities when the drug was licensed in Britain two years ago. The High Court held that these guidelines amounted to an instruction that the drug should be available to those patients that neurologists believed would benefit from it.

Dr Vivienne Nathanson, the British Medical Association's head of health policy, said: "We need to get away from the lottery which means that a patient's access to treatment can depend on their postcode. Although there are national prescribing guidelines for some new drugs, for most drugs and treatment there is no guidance and health authorities have to make very tough decisions."

Cementing success: Lee Blower, 22, of Shrewsbury, Shropshire, demonstrating the expertise that won him a gold medal in the bricklaying section of the International Youth Skill Olympics at St Gallen, Switzerland

Ballet teacher wins case but not a new job

By A Staff Reporter

A TEACHER at the Royal Ballet School yesterday won her claim for unfair dismissal but failed to get her job back. Linda Goss, 44, who taught for eight years at the £20,000-a-year boarding school, had said she was sacked because she complained repeatedly that children were bullied and mocked by staff.

An industrial tribunal in Croydon, south London, agreed that the dismissal was unfair but said that it was made because the school needed to make staff changes and not because of victimisation after her complaints. However, staff had not discussed the matter with her or given any consideration to her redeployment.

Ms Goss, from Dartmouth, Devon, who had been refused reinstatement to her £27,000-a-year job, was awarded £11,300 compensation. She told the tribunal that she had felt sacrificed when she learnt that her contract would not be renewed and linked this to her allegations that children were overworked and humiliated.

The former dancer with the Bolshoi Ballet said that her job at the school in Richmond, southwest London, was her life. She had been unable to find work since and was considering going abroad.

The tribunal dismissed a claim of sexual discrimination by Ms Goss, who claimed that a male teacher, Anatoli Grigoriev, was given preferential treatment over her and was paid more.

Dame Merle Park, the director of the school, said reinstatement would be "totally inappropriate" because of what Ms Goss had said during the hearing. "The allegations that have been made of the management, the staff, her colleagues, means [relationships have] been soured and we have no trust and confidence in Linda."

Kray wedding photos will be for the family's eyes only

By Richard Ford
Home Correspondent

REGGIE KRAY has not been allowed to organise his own wedding photographs because it was feared they would be sold to the media. A Prison Service photographer will take the official pictures of Kray, 63, and his bride, Roberta Jones, 38, at the ceremony in the chapel of Maidstone jail on Monday.

The couple will each be given a set of proofs, but the copyright will remain with the Home Office in an attempt to stop publication. Kray's twin brother, Ronnie, died two years ago.

The Prison Service took the decision amid suspicions that pictures of the wedding would be offered to the media for £10,000. A spokesman said last night: "A Prison Service photographer will take photos of the wedding. No other photographer will be permitted to attend. The copyright will remain with the Home Office. Anyone publishing the pictures would be breaking the law, and would be prosecuted accordingly."

Kray is in the twenty-ninth year of a 30-year sentence imposed for the murder of Jack "The Hat" McVitie. He met Ms Jones a year ago when she visited the jail in Kent. His first wife, Frances, committed suicide two years after they married in 1965.

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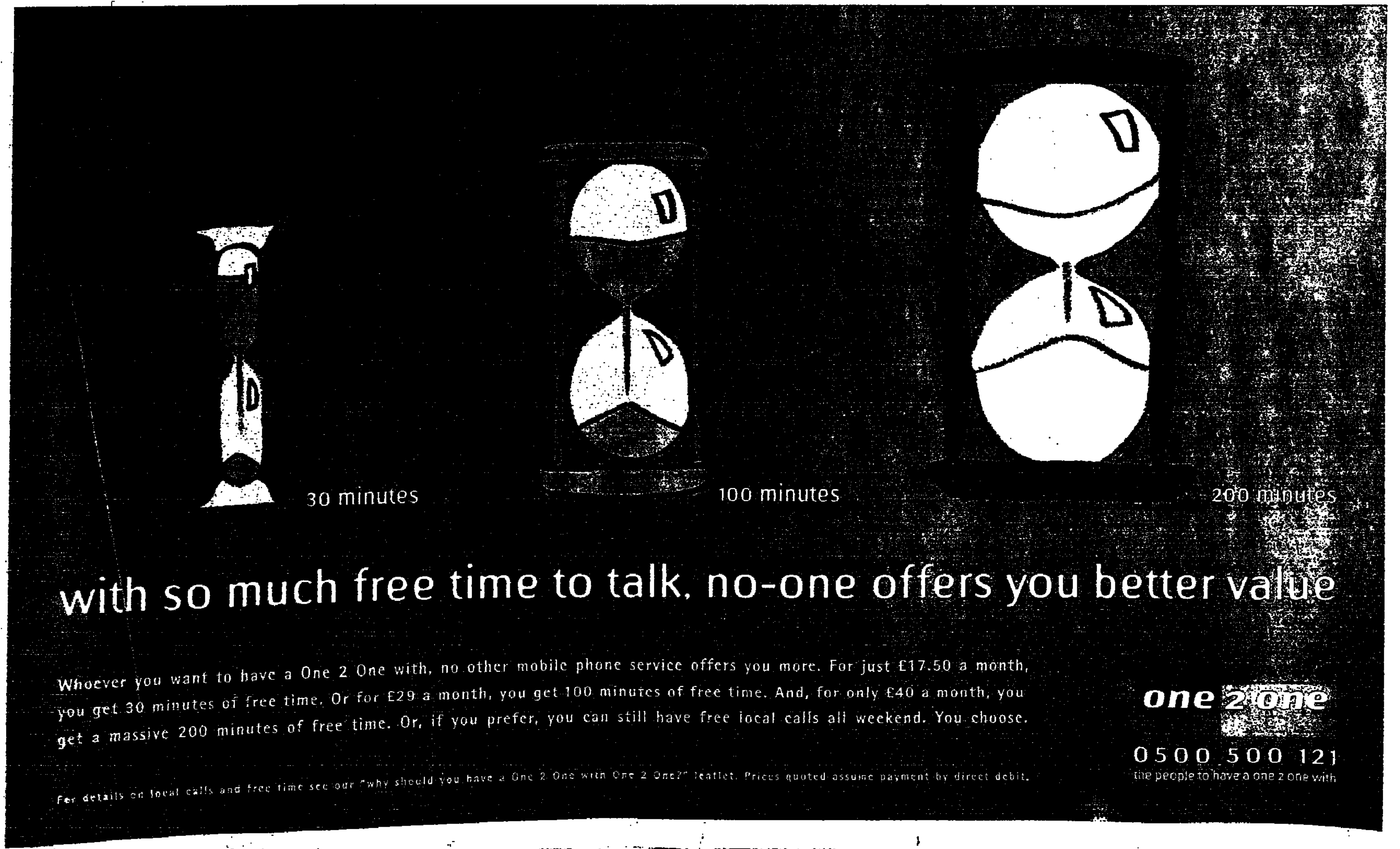

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Gun test throws doubt on King assassin

By Tunku Varadarajan
in New York

NEW forensic evidence suggests that James Earl Ray, convicted of the murder of Martin Luther King Jr, may have been jailed for a crime he did not commit.

Doubts about his trial emerged yesterday after a judge in Memphis, Tennessee, said that test bullets fired from a rifle owned by James Earl Ray had marks that differed from the bullet which killed King. Ray, who has always protested his innocence, is serving a 99-year jail sentence for the assassination in 1968 of the black civil rights leader.

Reporting his conclusions on forensic tests, Judge Joe Brown, of the Memphis Criminal Court, said: "The comparison [between the bullets] revealed that the gross and unique characteristic signature left on the 12 test bullets by the James Earl Ray rifle was not present on the death bullet."

His observations, which should excite lawyers and conspiracy theorists alike, come after tests in a laboratory, where scientists fired Ray's gun into a tank of water, later analysing the bullets under a microscope. Ray's lawyers hope that the new evidence is compelling enough to win their client a retrial.

Ray was convicted in 1968 after he pleaded guilty. He recanted days later, saying that he entered the plea only to avoid the death penalty. His guilty plea has been upheld eight times by a variety of state and federal courts.

Fish feel the catch as Yeltsin has break from rain

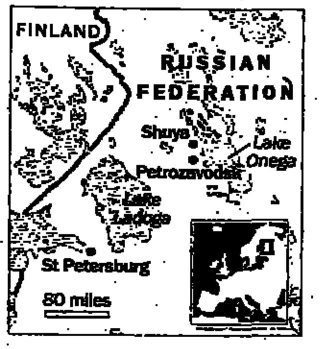
From Richard Beeston in Moscow

REUTER

Boris Yeltsin and his wife Naina enjoy their holiday earlier this week. The President has taken up fishing after being banned from shooting

PRESIDENT YELTSIN left little to chance this week when he embarked on a fishing trip in northern Russia: aircraft were scrambled to clear rain clouds, and a lake was stocked with thousands of fish to ensure the Kremlin leader had plenty to catch.

Although the Russian leader's two-month holiday in the northern lakes region of Karelia was supposed to be a quiet family break to forget the trappings of office and pressures of the job, behind the scenes a small army of Kremlin officials has been on hand to ensure the trip goes smoothly.



Following in the tradition of Soviet leaders, who even in their dotage insisted on shooting semi-tame bears and boars to prove their prowess, nothing was left to chance when the Russian leader cast his line into Lake Ukshe.

Anatoli Tsigankov, the editor of the local Karelian newspaper, said locals first knew of the arrival of their grand visitor when the authorities banned them from going on the lake to fish.

Then, despite a spate of bad weather, he said the climate suddenly changed — thanks to the expensive intervention of light aircraft designed to seed approaching rainclouds.

By far the best touch was provided by the Karelian Fisheries Commission, which was so eager to please its guest that it stocked the lake with thousands of extra fish.

"We were told by the city administration to make sure Yeltsin had a good time, and that is what we are doing," said a fisheries official, following the tradition of Prince Potemkin, whose fake villages so impressed Catherine the Great.

"There are probably an extra 10,000 fish that were specially stocked for the President," the official told the *St Petersburg Times*.

Kremlin sources said the President was also receiving covert help from his bodyguards, who set off each morning to dig up worms for their boss to use as bait.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the Kremlin leader appears to be notching up record catches. Naina Yeltsin, whose family is now established for the summer at the presidential residence at Shuya, said this week that her husband came home one day with 20 fish and the next with 30, mainly perch and roach. "Some were very small, but still very tasty," she said. "I think the water is very good here."

While the President's arrival may be bad news for Karelia's fish population, the region's four-legged and feathered animals can rest easy — at least while Mrs Yeltsin is on hand.

The Kremlin leader's love of fishing is surpassed only by his passion for shooting, and even during his illness last year he claimed to have shot scores of duck and a large wild boar. However, since his heart operation last year he has been banned by his wife from picking up a gun and has concentrated his efforts on angling.

Mr Yeltsin's absence from Moscow has prompted many other senior Russian figures to escape the heat and dust and head for the countryside or beach. The difference this year is that all ministers and political leaders have gone to great lengths to advertise the fact that they are spending their holidays with their wives and children.

The move, according to local reports, was prompted by the dismissal of Valentin Kovalyov, the former Justice Minister, who was recorded on a secret video taking part in an orgy held at a sauna frequented by Russian mobsters. Other politicians have apparently also been filmed in compromising positions. No one wants to become the next scandal victim.

Flame of Albanian unrest threatens Macedonian tinderbox

From James Pettifer
in Tetovo

TENSION gripped western Macedonia yesterday with frequent roadblocks and a heavy special forces presence after an outbreak of violence which left two young ethnic Albanians dead and 40 people with serious gunshot wounds.

More than 200 people were taken to hospital after fighting broke out in the normally quiet Islamic town of Gostivar near here on Wednesday. Rufi Osmali, the newly-elected radical Mayor, has been arrested and accused of inciting the violence.

About a quarter of the population of Macedonia, long regarded as the tinderbox of the southern Balkans, are ethnic Albanians, most of whom live in traditional Muslim communities in the western mountains. Since the fall of communism, the border with Albania has been opened, and links renewed. At the same time, nationalist feelings in these communities has grown.

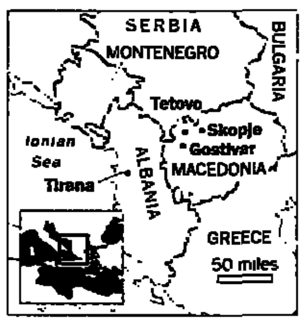
A dispute about the right to fly the Albanian flag erupted when US-trained Macedonian special forces moved into the town with armoured vehicles at about 3am on Wednesday, surrounded the town hall, and broke into it.

Five hours later an angry Albanian crowd gathered and tried to eject them. Scuffles broke out, followed by bursts of gunfire. The Macedonian version reported on television yesterday claimed the special forces "were helping people who were being attacked by terrorists".

What is indisputable in the fog of claims and counterclaims is that Albanians also used weapons, possibly brought across the border, and that disturbances continued all day.

Although the Macedonian action has succeeded in stopping for the time being what is seen as a secessionist movement, there will be a heavy price to pay in community relations. The Albanians are sufficiently numerous to have a right of veto over the future of the state. The use of weapons by both sides must reinforce the West's fears of the spread of violence from Albania.

As far as can be established, units of the United Nations peacekeeping force based in Tetovo did not play any part in the events. Yesterday they appeared to be confined to barracks in the town.



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Spain prays for hostage facing death deadline

From Giles Tremlett in Madrid

SPAIN is awaiting with horror the threatened murder today by the Basque separatist group Eta of a kidnapped town councillor from the Prime Minister's Popular Party.

Eta has said it will kill Miguel Angel Blanco, 29, if José María Aznar's conservative Government does not immediately bow to its demands. The separatist group wants its prisoners — there are more than 500 in Spanish jails — moved to jails in the northern Basque region.

Señor Aznar's Government has repeatedly said it will not bow to Eta's blackmail and the demands are logistically impossible in the time-limit given: the deadline is 4pm Spanish time today.

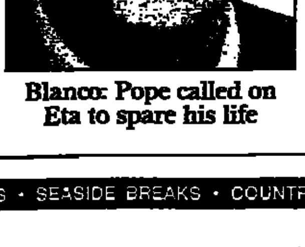
"Eta knows its conditions are impossible," a joint statement from the Popular Party and Spain's other principal political parties said. "This is a death sentence with a deadline." The Pope appealed for the release of Señor Blanco, calling the death threat an "offence to human and Christian conscience" and "an act of terrorism", in a message to the Bishop of Bilbao, Ricardo Blázquez Pérez. Citizens and church communities "reject this permanent form of violence which offends human and Christian conscience", the Pope said.

Hundreds of thousands of people took part in silent protests in town squares across Spain yesterday. Peace groups organised all-night candelit vigils in Señor Blanco's home town of Ermua, near Bilbao, northern Spain, and in other Basque towns, to urge Eta to spare his life. Television programmes on most channels carried the symbol of a blue ribbon in one corner of the screen as a protest against Eta's action.

Police were scouring the Basque country for the young councillor and his kidnappers. Señor Blanco was abducted on Thursday after having lunch at his family's home in Ermua, where he is one of the four Popular Party councillors. He had been due to take a train to the nearby town of Eibar, where he works as a financial consultant.

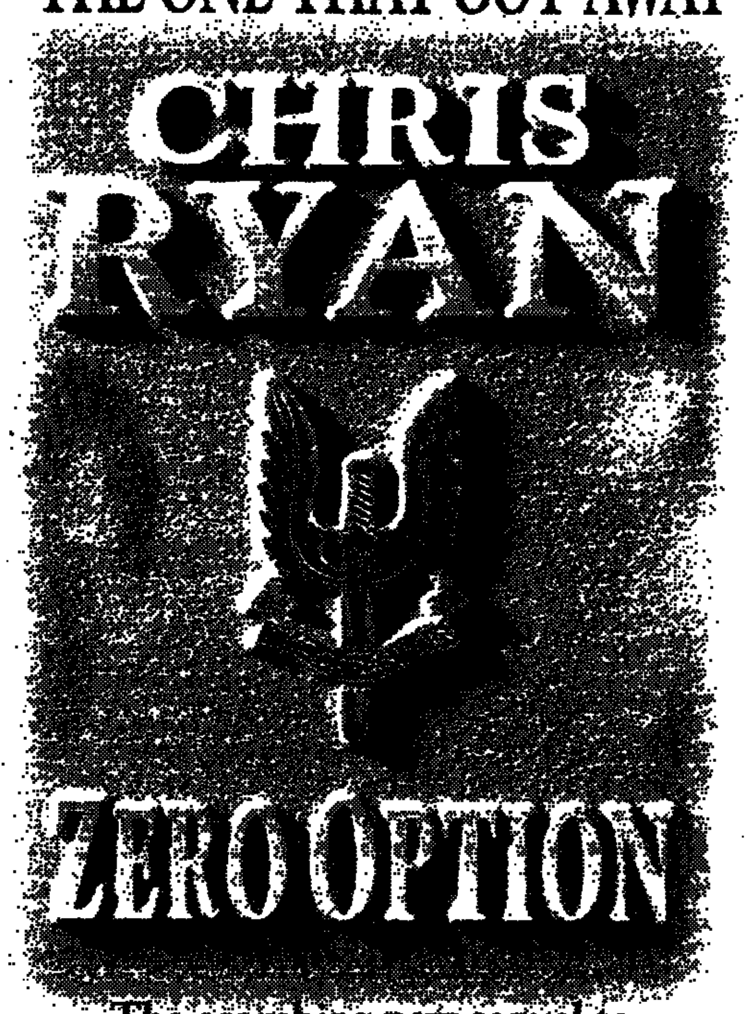
Later in the afternoon an Eta representative called a Basque newspaper to say Señor Blanco had been kidnapped and would be killed if the prisoners were not moved within 48 hours.

☐ Brussels: About 300 Spanish EU officials staged a "silent protest" here over the death threat. *(AFP)*



Blanco: Pope called on Eta to spare his life

From the bestselling author of
THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY



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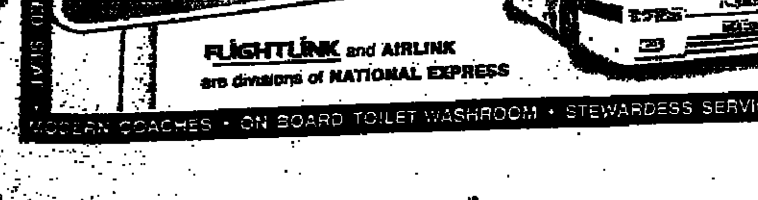

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Tsarist capital emerges from Moscow's shadow with its own ideas on high and low culture

Treasure house of art offers war booty deal

ST PETERSBURG FILE

by RICHARD BEESTON

WHEN President Yeltsin recently declared that St Petersburg should assert itself as Russia's cultural capital, he never expected the city to take him so seriously.

After decades of struggling to overcome Moscow's domination, the beautiful but dilapidated Tsarist capital is finally begining to shake off its provinciality and do things its own way.

Certainly that was the message this week from Mikhail Piotrovsky, the director of the Hermitage Museum, Russia's greatest cultural treasure, who boldly entered the political minefield surrounding the fate of "trophy art".

Russia has so far steadfastly refused to return any of the estimated 200,000 art treasures plundered by Soviet troops after the Second World War. The fate of the booty, worth billions of pounds, is currently being decided by President Yeltsin, who has the final say on a Bill calling for all art treasures to be declared Russian property.

"Frankly, the issue will never be resolved if we leave it up to the politicians," said Mr Piotrovsky, who advocates a compromise between the former belligerents. "We will never get anywhere if we have the 'I won, you lost' mentality."

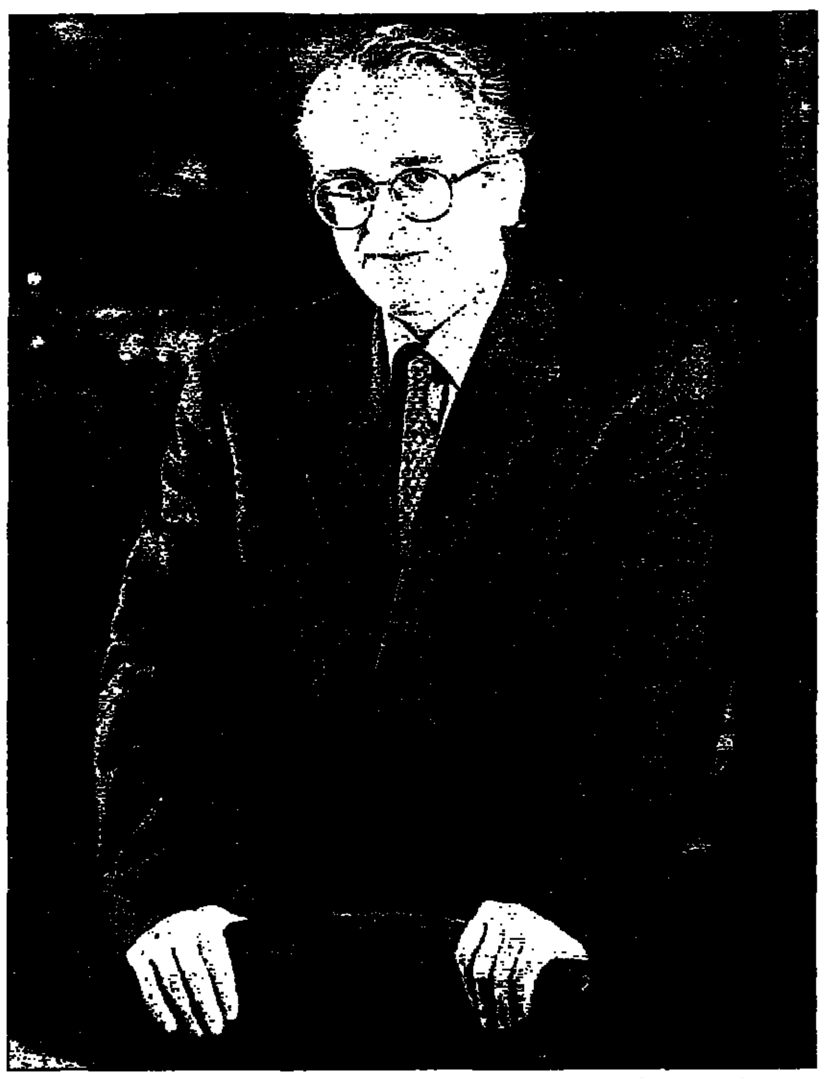
Under his plan, the fate of the war booty would be negotiated over two or three years with the aim of dividing the treasures in half and making ownership final and legally binding.

"Privately many Germans have told me that they would be prepared to divide the art 50-50, and this seems to be the only fair arrangement," he said. Not surprisingly, the Hermitage would do well out of such a deal. It received several hundred priceless works from its share of the booty, including scores of French Impressionist paintings, revealed in a stunning exhibition two years ago.

The proposal, while based on the principle of compromise, is also a product of St Petersburg's more assertive attitude. The Hermitage, which once depended on shrinking government handouts for survival, now raises a third of its annual budget through fundraising, much of it from foreign sponsors.

Similarly, while Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre is struggling to survive and maintain its sinking reputation, the Kirov's ballet and opera companies in St Petersburg have gone from strength to strength.

While it may be too early to predict the city's rehabilitation after decades of Communist neglect, a new and energetic Mayor in St Petersburg and a sharp increase in outside investment suggest that the city may be returning to its former glory.



Mikhail Piotrovsky of the Hermitage, who is offering to share war booty

New life for a baroque relic

EIGHTY years after it was appropriated by the Bolsheviks, a small corner of St Petersburg that is forever British may finally be returned to its rightful owners.

The Anglican church, situated appropriately on the English Embankment, is an 18th-century baroque masterpiece built to serve the once thriving British community, living in the then Tsarist capital of Russia.

In spite of the indifference of its Communist owners, and the threat to its survival during the bloody siege of Leningrad by the Germans, the church has pulled through intact with the original altar, font and even the organ still in place. Although the building is currently being used as a souvenir shop, the first service in eight decades was held there last year by a Royal Navy chaplain and there are moves to retrieve it permanently.

Big Brother is watching your sofa

ST PETERSBURG'S best 24-hour live soap opera will come to a close next week, when fans will pay their final visit to the Simpo furniture shop and say goodbye to Sergei and Natasha.

The good-looking young couple have been the centre of attention since an advertising company offered to give them all the furniture in the shop window — worth more than £3,000 — if they became live displays for a fortnight.

Although the lavatory is out of sight and the couple's large double bed is discreetly hidden behind a screen, everything else they do is in full view of passers-by on Savushkina Street.

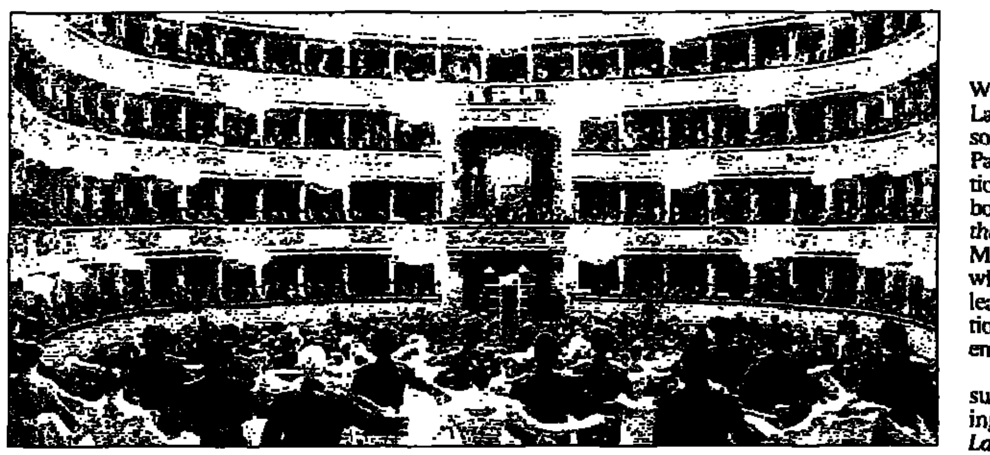
While attracting mild curiosity at first, the couple's activities turned into a political issue when 20 Bolsheviks picketed the shop, protesting against "this disgusting show, which debases intimate relationships and contradicts the moral standards of the Slavs".

The controversy became a sensation when it was revealed that the couple were not newlyweds, as claimed. Indeed, Sergei was married to someone else — a spectator on the street.

In spite of the disclosure, the couple stuck it out as furniture shoppers, journalists and friends streamed through their living room, testing out sofas, asking personal questions and helping themselves to cups of coffee.

Naturally, the advertisers who arranged the display are delighted and the city is already waiting for the arrival of the next couple.

Chorus of alarm raised in Milan over La Scala privatisation plan



18th-century operatic opulence hides the failings of La Scala's stage and orchestra pit

FROM RICHARD OWEN
IN ROME

WHEN the final production of La Scala's current opera season — an "erotic and anti-Papist" modern dress production of Puccini's *Tosca* — was booed this month, Paolo Arca, the artistic director at the Milan opera house, said the whistles and catcalls were "at least a sign that our productions still invoke passion and emotion".

But as La Scala takes a summer break before returning with Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* in the autumn, there are growing fears for its future, despite an ambitious "Scala 2001" scheme to renovate its 18th-century home and reorganise its finances. Riccardo Muti, the celebrated conductor and La Scala's musical director, noted that the "inadequacies" of the theatre's stage, orchestra pit and backstage facilities meant that quality was "bound to suffer".

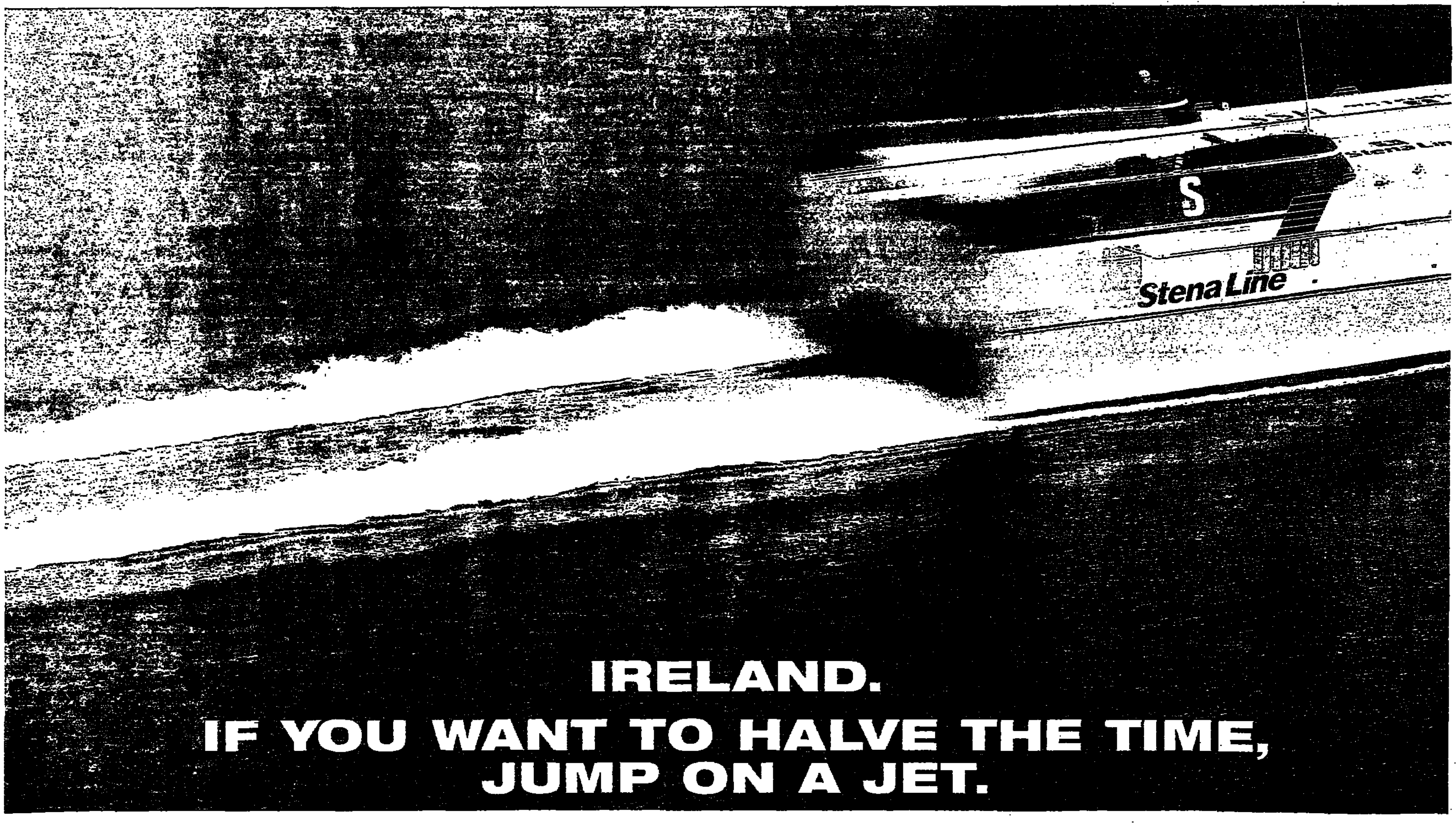
Asked by *La Repubblica* about plans to restore the theatre to its 1778 glory for the millennium, Signor Muti said he hoped the "La Scala 2001" project would not become bogged down in an endless series of bureaucratic wrangles, making it "not so much La Scala 2001 as the operatic equivalent of *2001, A Space Odyssey*". The paper commented that, if La Scala did not put its house in order, Muti might "pack his bags".

The decision to renovate La Scala follows the introduction of more stringent safety regulations after disastrous fires at the Petruzzelli opera house at Bari and La Fenice opera house in Venice. The board of La Scala recently voted to move to a new auditorium in the depressed "post-industrial" suburb of La Bicocca, in northeast Milan, on the site of a former Pirelli tyre factory. This would allow Piermarini's great baroque theatre in the centre of Milan to be refitted and upgraded.

But an investigation into "irregularities" over the award of La Bicocca's building contract has held up the project, and the proposed 2,500-seat auditorium is still on the drawing board. Carlo Fontana, La Scala's Superintendent, has described the situation as "an emergency", vowing not to leave the present site without a guarantee that the orchestra and chorus will be back "well in time for January 2001".

Signor Fontana and the theatre management are meanwhile pinning their hopes on a scheme for partial privatisation of La Scala. Under a radical plan provisionally approved by the board last month, the state would continue to provide half the annual £50 million budget, but a consortium of banks and companies — including Pirelli — would provide badly needed investment.

In a move which has shocked some more traditionally minded opera patrons, the private investors have also offered to generate profit-making ideas, including the marketing of La Scala products to cash in on its reputation.



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The nation has need of its hereditary piers

Visiting the Brighton Festival in May I saw a glorious spectre. She seemed to float on the sea, out beyond the Grand Hotel, and at night her newly lit contours danced on the waves like a thousand candles. Locals rubbed their eyes. Hadn't this old lady died more than 20 years ago? If *The Flying Dutchman* itself had anchored off Rottingdean the solid citizens of East Sussex couldn't have been more startled. Somebody, somehow, had resurrected the venerable West Pier.

Anybody who cares about the British seaside would have responded as I did to that startling offshore rebirth: with a mixture of intense pleasure and deep sadness. The pleasure comes in seeing one of the most exotic miracles of Victorian construction — the only Grade I listed pier in Britain — gradually being restored to something like its former, 1,000ft glory. Of course, gradual is the word: a £950,000 lottery grant has so far barely been enough to hoist some sturdy walkways across the decayed structure. The small matter of £35 million needs to be raised if the West Pier is to rejoin its slightly less majestic eastward twin, the Palace Pier, in full, kiss-me-quick swing.

But the trust that now owns the West Pier is confident that with another £4 million pledged from the lottery and £10 million from a private developer enough progress can be made for the pier to start its working life again. That will please such diverse spirits as Lord Attenborough, who filmed those bitter-sweet chorus scenes in *Oh! What A Lovely War* there, and the eccentric boxer, Chris Eubank, who was so enamoured of the rusting hulk that at one stage he planned to buy it and build a house on the end.

So why the sadness? Well, because the renaissance that is happening in Brighton could so easily be mirrored right across the British seaside, if only we took more pride in the fantastical maritime architecture to be found — mostly decayed, defiled or derelict — in practically every coastal resort.

Some people hold an unshakeably pessimistic opinion of our seaside, believing it was doomed to a slow, sordid death from the moment that God created the 4.30am Luton-to-Benidorm jumbo. Even the man from the English Tourist Board was downbeat about our bracing maritime delights when I phoned him this week — which is a bit sad, when you think about it.

WEEK IN THE ARTS

RICHARD MORRISON

"You have to remember," he said gloomily, "that a whole generation of Britons has now reached adulthood without ever holidaying at a British seaside resort."

But perhaps the ETB has good cause to be depressed. Last year (the "Year of the Pier"), in partnership with the National Trust, it put together what many thought was a brilliant millennium lottery bid: £25 million to finance more than 200 imaginative seaside projects around the country. They included new uses for disused lighthouses, new coastal paths, restoration schemes for promenades, piers and pavilions, public art trails, exciting environmental projects.

The Millennium Commission threw the bid out. What a short-sighted, unromantic bunch! Perhaps, like Disraeli, they "can't see the use of the sea". Approving PVC domes is more their style. True, the ETB scheme did not include a remedy for every piece of barnacled cast-iron Victoriana now poking into the Channel. But it could have given huge impetus to the notion of Britain putting its seafront in order by the year 2000.

Happily, many individual projects have gone ahead anyway, financed by lottery money from the (more enlightened) Heritage Fund, or by local authorities that have belatedly woken up to the potential of their tarnished jewels, or by commercial operators determined to make the British seaside profitable again.

Cromer, on the raw Norfolk coast, rebuilt its pier with magnificent speed when a runaway tug sliced it up in 1994, so that "the last authentic end-of-the-pier show" (with certainly the last authentic end-of-the-pier jokes) can go on pulling in 40,000 punters each summer. Blackpool, in tandem with First Leisure (which owns the three superb piers), is spending £9 million on the seafront. Bridlington has rebuilt its pier for £5 million. Morecambe Bay is undergoing a visionary £20 million upgrade, with the emphasis on "green" projects. Weston-super-Mare has erected Britain's first new pier for decades, and Clacton is giving its clifftop Memorial Gardens a £416,000 makeover. Clevedon has spent a similar sum restoring its pier. There are even cock-eyed optimists in Essex who believe that they can resuscitate Southend Pier, the world's longest, but also the most ill-fated, raked by fires in 1976, 1977 and 1995, and cut in half by an errant coaster in 1988.

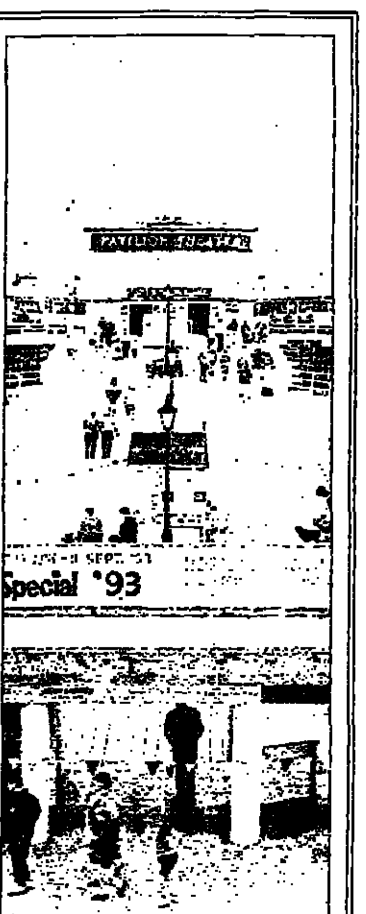
But there is much still to be done. Half of Britain's 43 extant Victorian and Edwardian piers are in private hands, and many owners are on the brink of giving up the struggle to keep them open. They feel, with some justification, that those who dole out lottery largesse are biased against them. Many coastal local authorities, too, turn a blind eye to the squalor on their own seafront, as though it has nothing to do with the chronic unemployment in their region. Get real, councillors!

The British seaside was once the playground of an Empire, and a refreshment to its greatest creative spirits. Elgar conducted on Brighton West Pier. Turner, Constable, Britten, Graham Greene, Masefield and many others famously drew inspiration from our coasts. Debussy was French, but he was sensible enough to compose his maritime masterpiece, *La Mer*, at Eastbourne. Conrad was Polish, but when he noted that in Britain "men and sea interpenetrate" he put his finger on our national pulse.

Of course we will never return to an era when the vast majority of Britons holidayed for a fortnight at a British seaside resort; not unless global warming takes a dramatic turn for the worse. But a bit of imaginative leadership from on high, allied to a comparatively small amount of lottery funding, could revitalise our coastal culture.

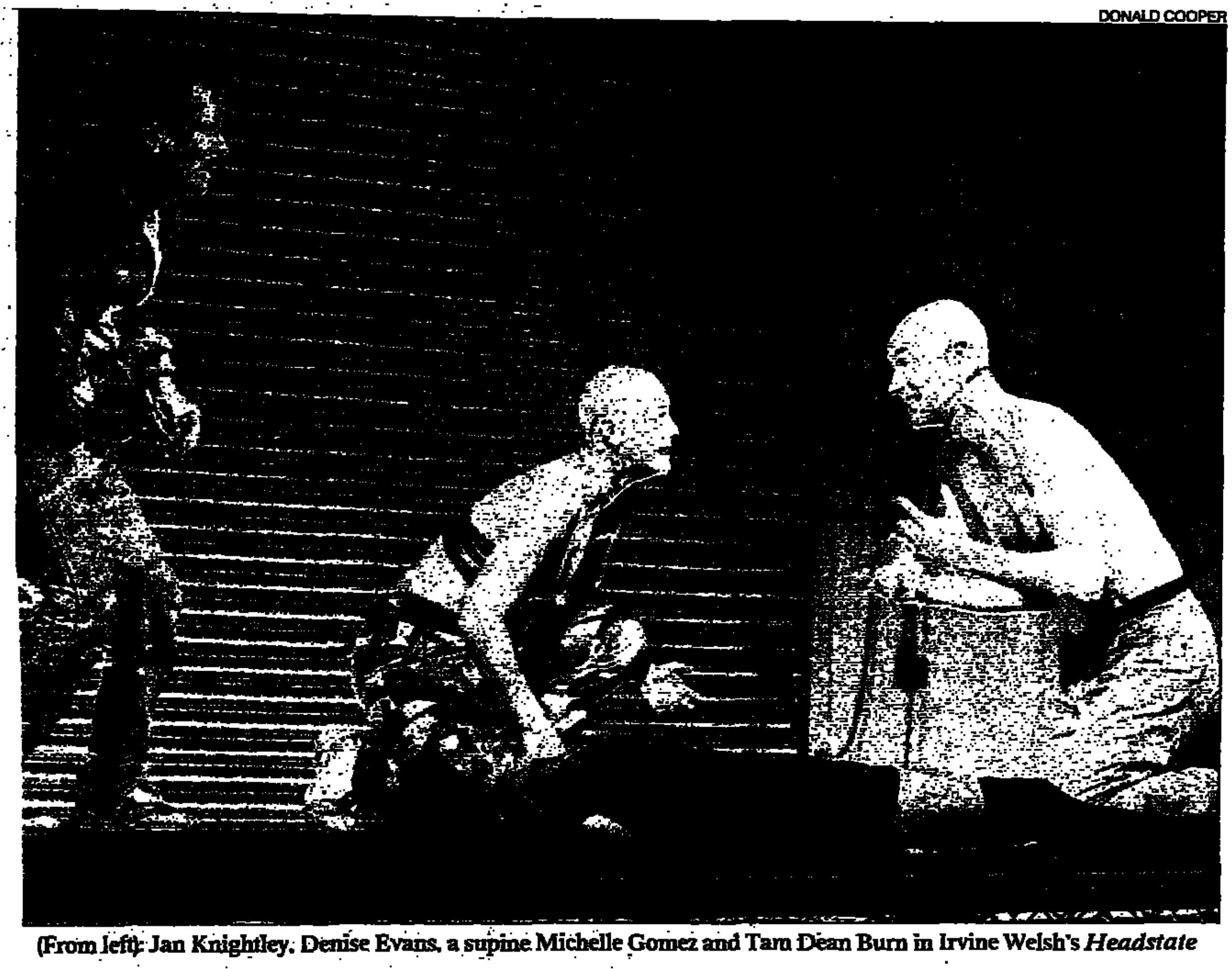
They could again become destinations of first choice for day-trippers and foreign tourists, instead of lagging well behind inland theme parks and heritage sites. And we could all approach our seafronts with a childlike thrill of anticipation, instead of with the weary expectation of encountering a seedy and often rather sinister dilapidation that would not be tolerated in our most depressed inner cities.

You think I'm exaggerating? Well, summer has arrived. Go and see for yourself.



No end to the pier show for Cromer, on the Norfolk coast

THEATRE: Benedict Nightingale gets left behind by Irvine Welsh's new trip


DONALD COOPER

(From left): Jan Knightley, Denise Evans, a supine Michelle Gomez and Tam Dean Burn in Irvine Welsh's *Headstate*

A bit of a bummer

Headstate
Trinity Buoy Wharf, E14

The venue is a pretty warehouse-cum-lighthouse that looks across the Thames to the jumble of slag and cranes where the Millennium Dome will or will not be built. The place was once used for storing buoys, masts and the sort of stuff that nowadays you might find in a nautical museum in Greenwich itself. But let no nostalgic tar take his lad on a field trip to Trinity Buoy Wharf just now. Davey Jones's locker would make comfier visiting than the urban hellhole into which the Greenwich and Docklands Festival has temporarily transformed the building.

It is easy to believe that Irvine Welsh, author of *Trainspotting*, is one of the begetters of *Headstate*. It is just as unsurprising that his co-devisers are the abrasive Edinburgh company Boilerhouse. In the programme its performers suggest a dictionary definition for themselves. "Boilerhouse: stab, jab, push, thrill, cajole, seduce, confront and invent." Myself, I would add "deafen, blind, confuse and annoy", but you will get the idea.

This is acid house Welsh, *Trainspotting* with strobe lights, rave music and robust performance art embellishing its portrait of young people in chaos. For a time, I thought the evening would consist of nothing but eye-splintering flashes of red and white in the murk. But then silhouettes appear, the first of many four-letter words is distantly heard, people clamber on rod-and-mesh platforms that trundle past the audience's puzzled little faces, and something discernible as a situation emerges.

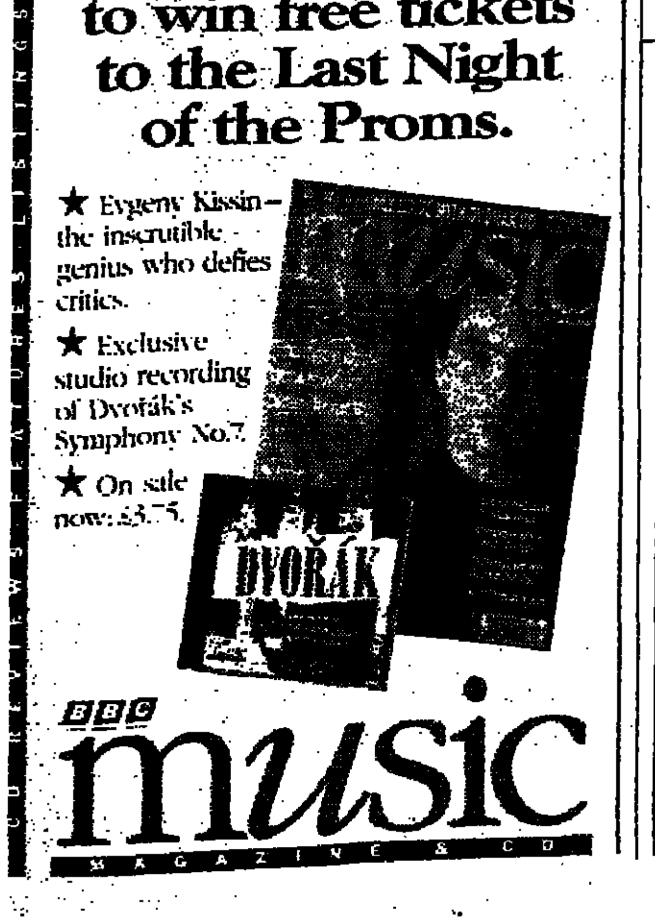
I never worked out who was playing whom, because the programme baldly lists the cast as Tam Dean Burn, Denise Evans, Michelle Gomez and Jan Knightley. Nor was I always sure what was going on, for Welsh kept playing games with chronology and clarity, and burbles of incomprehensible Scots invective sometimes came from parts of the warehouse where I wasn't standing.

But it is evident that Martin is a butcher and part-time pusher, that Tina is his lover and a drug addict, that John is a no-hoper who falls for a woman who wears a T-shirt with the word Angel embossed on it, and that Angel is trying to rescue them from themselves.

Anyway, Tina is pestered by parents who want her to go to university and denied her babies by social service apparatchiks whose line, "You don't have the maturity or financial security to look after them", echoes, camp-commandant style, around the warehouse. Meanwhile, horrible, sneering Martin decides that people are just live meat, lets his store of dead meat rot, and forces poor John to become his pet dog.

Together, they bombard Angel to death with cardboard boxes, and are left wondering whether or not to pickle her in formaldehyde and hire her out to necrophiliacs.

With words like "capitalism" and "consumerism" surfacing, Welsh and Boilerhouse presumably think they have something to say about our society. But that would need more analysis and less impressionistic ado. Myself, I felt that Boilerhouse was simply boilerhousing away, and to decidedly off-putting effect.



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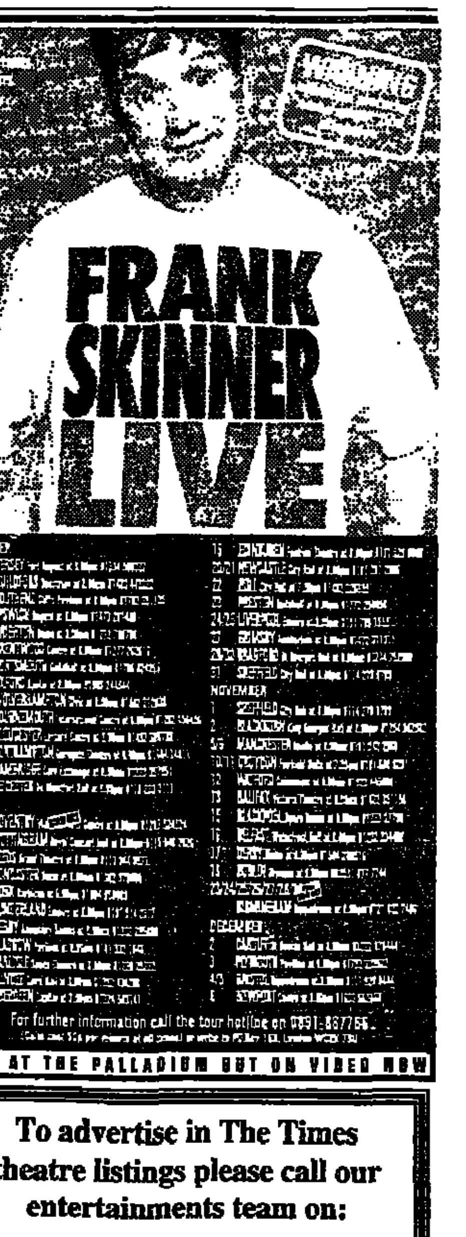

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Philip Howard

■ Foxhunting is a dull ride, an excuse to be rude, and a jolly good read

Habeas brush is not so fundamental a human right as *habeas corpus*. We have made cockfighting, trial by ordeal and prizefighting illegal without completely destroying our liberties won by Magna Carta. The best argument against hunting is its cruelty. The best argument for letting Yoicks Tallyhoery "Whoo-oop, at him Hannibal" gallop on is that the State should not ban activities unless they cause real public nuisance or offence. I would prohibit hare-coursing: the hare is a beautiful creature which screams pitiably when caught, and is already doomed by the pesticides and fertilisers of rapacious grain barons.

Class war has been part of hunting since the Norman aristos made poaching a capital offence. The man on the horse looks down on the pedestrian, and the man on foot looks up at the horseman with mutual suspicion. To kill a fox by any method other than the approved one — of hunting it with hounds and on horseback — is regarded as little better than criminal. And to misuse hunting terminology, for example by calling hounds "dogs" or a "pink" coat red, is to betray not merely laughable ignorance but also shameful evidence of ill-breeding. While I was walking in the Borders, a fox ran into a drain. Shortly afterwards a huntress from the Duke of Buccleuch's rode up side-saddle, in full monte of bowler, veil and skin-tight jodhpurs. Daphne: "Did the fawx come this way?" PH, surprised into betrayal: "It went down that drain." Daphne, with withering scorn: "You mean it went to *greound*."

Nevertheless, the countrymen made a touching sight in Hyde Park, especially those who had driven there from Brown's Hotel in their Rollers and dressed down for the occasion. There are more foxes in Hyde Park now than there are in the Shire parasuburbs. Hounds are lovely dawgs, unless you are a fox. And on foxhunting I am an agnostic. There must be more important things for Government to do than ban it. And hunting will naturally fade away anyway, because of intensive farming. Hunters no longer charge like cavalry through open country. They spend most of their time sitting in queues like motorists in a tailback.

But an extensive and peculiar genre of literature will fade away with hunting. What would be left of traditional ballads if you took away the horse and the hound from their haunting, hunting verses? Hunting was a stock topic of the earliest poetry, from Odysseus's tell-tale scar and the labours of Hercules. English literature begins with Beowulf hunting the monster Grendel in East Anglian fens and carries on with Sir Gawain, whose fitts (or chapters) conclude with the first of the huntin' and bonkin' novels. Hunting runs through the works of the Stratford boy. Theseus: "My hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind,/ So flew'd, so sanded: and their heads are hung/ With ears that sweep away the morning dew." Siegfried Sassoon satirised the horrors of war beside the absurdity of foxhunting.

Sport, because it excites intense transient emotion, is a field for poetry. Cricket and golf make popular poetry, because they are so complicated. Running and throwing the discus make poetry, because they are simple. But hunting has made more poetry than all of them. John Masefield is one of the Poet Laureates who did hunting, at length, in *Reynard the Fox*. "The fox knew well that, before they tore him,/ They should try their speed on the downs before him." Masefield was prudent to let the fox escape by going to earth at the end. Even those who consider horses thicker creatures even than their worshippers can thrill to Stubbs, especially Whistlejacket seen with a bubble saying "How much longer do I have to hold this pose?" down a long corridor at the National Gallery. Surtees with Jorrocks and *Mr Sponge's Sporting Tour* gave Dickens the pattern for Pickwick. Esmond Haddock won a bride and freedom from aunts by his spirited rendering of "A-huntin' we will go". Dame Juliana Barnes, the suspect author of *The Book of St Albans*, gave English its rich nouns of assemblage from the venereal or hunting game, such as a scoop of reporters or a slant of journalists.

Blow all the rudeness and snobbery. Pity the plumage, but forget the dying bird. Hunting is batty but primal. And though it now makes a dull ride, it is still a good read.

Accused of muddling through, **Lord Irvine** insists Labour's most ambitious programme is still on track

My pivotal role in the constitutional revolution

Only one major political party believes that our constitution stands in need of change at all. The Tories in government scaled new heights of complacency in defending the status quo. It was as if our constitution had been a jewel so beyond improvement that we had reached the end of history. The Conservatives paid the price of being ejected from office by the electorate after 18 years of increasingly autocratic, remote and secretive government. They lost the trust of the people and, in the process, undermined public confidence in our democratic institutions.

This Government was elected on a pledge to restore faith in democracy. We have embarked on the most ambitious and extensive programme of constitutional reform and modernisation this century. It is aimed at restoring the British people's trust in government and building a constitution fit for the next century. We will govern with a new spirit of openness. We will enter into a partnership with the people, governing by consent and seeking to fashion consensus in a way that is both honest and accountable.

Power has been concentrated in the hands of too few people at the top. We want to restore more freedom to local communities and bring power closer to the people by devolving power away from the centre to Scotland, Wales, London and, where there is a clear demand, to the English regions. We will incorporate the European Convention on Human Rights into United Kingdom law to bring these rights home and allow our people access to them in their national courts. And we will introduce a Freedom of Information Act to give people the right to know what government is doing in their name.

Open and accountable government and freedom of information are the lifeblood of a modern and secure democracy. A culture of secrecy flourished under the Tories. Instead of the soft option of putting an existing code of practice into statute, we are engaged on a root-and-branch review of every issue. It is right that we should take the time necessary to achieve a proper solution, through a careful synthesis of political input to the process of the Whitehall machine. The Government also believes that a vital and effective House of Commons is central to the revival of public confidence in politics and public life. We are committed to modernising the way Parliament works, and proposals for the handling of legislation are already before the select committee concerned. After that, the Government will turn to the composition and role of the House of Lords, which we are determined to make more representative.

So, this is a wide-ranging and extensive programme. But Peter Riddell need have no fear that the programme is piecemeal, or that its interconnections are not being thought through. Back in March this year we published a joint report with the Liberal Democrats, setting out a coherent and detailed programme for constitutional reform.

Before the general election, the Labour manifesto gave a complete picture of our policies and the thinking which binds them together. As soon as we were in Government, the Prime Minister convened a Cabinet committee with responsibility for constitutional reform policy, for the very reason that we need to consider the whole picture and to ensure that our programme maintains its coherence. And there can be no question of a lack of detailed consideration being given to each strand of the programme. I currently chair three separate committees, on devolution, freedom of information and incorporation of the European Convention on Human Rights, working through the detail of our proposals.

An important reason for my pivotal role as chairman of all three of these committees is to ensure that we do think through the implications of each of our reforms and get the linkages right. We recognise the importance of ensuring mutual compatibility between the various elements of our programme. Introducing freedom of information, for example, must achieve consistency with the incorporation of the European Convention on Human Rights. By legislating to ensure that those affected by administrative decisions are always given reasons, we will demonstrate that the convention is a basic floor of human rights, not a ceiling. On devolution, the immediate media focus is on the Scottish and Welsh referendums. But our proposals are designed to be viewed in the round. We are committed to offering London a similar opportunity and, in time, the English regions. The establishment of statutory Regional Development Agencies, announced in the Queen's Speech, is the first step towards making government more accountable in the regions of England.

Our programme is highly ambitious and cannot be achieved all at once. We make no apology for that, and have always said it should proceed step by step. Peter Riddell is right when he says that the Prime Minister does not want to unbalance the legislative programme. We were elected on a manifesto that promised action across every area of government: on education, health, law and order and, of course, the economy. Constitutional renewal must be balanced with these other important commitments.

Parliament will have every opportunity to consider our proposals. We cannot be responsible for the Tories' unwillingness to engage in constructive debate about modernising the British constitution. For the Government's part, we are making every effort to ensure that the issues are fully debated. Over the next few months we will be publishing White Papers on Scottish and Welsh devolution, freedom of information and incorporation of the European Convention on Human Rights. There will also be a Green Paper on proposals for a Greater London authority. There can be no question of a lack of attention to detail or proper consultation. There will be full debate on each step of the constitutional reform programme, both within Parliament and outside, as we are currently witnessing on our devolution proposals.

Rather than stifling debate, this measured and sensible approach allows more time for planning and implementation and increases the opportunities for debate about the constitution as a whole.

Peter Riddell accuses the Government of muddling through on constitutional reform. But in the same breath, he accepts that "we are moving from being subjects to becoming citizens with defined rights", acknowledging one of the central themes binding Labour's programme together. We are delivering power to the people, balancing rights and responsibilities, and restoring confidence in our constitution.

Lord Irvine of Lairg is Lord Chancellor of Great Britain.

The Governor, treason and plot

Was Chris Patten the victim of a Foreign Office conspiracy?

Simon Jenkins

1974: Howe announces the deal with China. 1997: Patten bites his lip as the handover begins

I left Hong Kong ten days ago and swore enough was enough. A chapter of empire had ended in a deluge of rain and overexposure. No more. The story was done.

I must recant. Jonathan Dimbleby's book on Chris Patten, *The Last Governor*, published today, contains allegations against British ministers and officials as astonishing as anything in recent imperial history. They amount to a charge of treason. The book was written on the basis of five years' close contact with Mr Patten, who is quoted at length, and his team at Government House. It is the argument for Mr Patten, lock, stock and devastating barrel. He is at present in Hawaii, seething with anger. I understand that documents showing what he regards as duplicity among his predecessors were uncovered as recently as during his departure from Government House. He wants a full parliamentary inquiry.

After reading the book, I imagine its cast of villains would agree, if only to clear their names. According to Patten-Dimbleby, a freemasonry of British diplomats and associates decided in the 1980s that the "Ming vase" of Hong Kong should be handed over to Beijing in 1997 undamaged by democracy, even if this meant dissembling to the people of Hong Kong and suppressing calls for colonial self-government. From the moment that Parliament called for a democratic administration in Hong Kong in 1984, the Foreign Office fought any such proposal. It was obsessed with staying in Beijing's good books.

Dimbleby charts private contacts immediately after Tiananmen Square (in defiance of a world boycott) and secret "winks and nods". After Mr Patten's appointment, Sir Percy Cradock, the former supremo of Britain's Hong Kong policy, became a roving "disloyal opposition" to the Governor. He visited Beijing behind the Governor's back and liaised with Communist officials in Hong Kong. Most galling for Mr Patten was the knowledge that those denouncing him in London as misguided and incompetent were eagerly seeking business from the notoriously corrupt Beijing regime.

These charges, quoted by Dimbleby from a senior public servant against his colleagues, are serious. I first joined the Hong Kong debate on Sir Percy's side. I could see the force of his argument that the Chinese regime was, as he once put it, "a bunch of thugs" who would turn Hong Kong into a wasteland if not handled properly. Democracy was a distraction. Hong Kong diplomacy post-1984 had to be that of surrender disguised as dignified retreat. To Sir Percy there was no alternative.

The British Government wanted an alternative and sent Mr Patten out to pursue it. He sought a more democratic regime prior to the handover, gambling that China would not ordain the wasteland strategy. We could have left any colony in the world Cradock-fashion, entrusting it to the most potent neighbour in the nicest possible terms. The frontline states could have been given to South Africa. The Falklands could have gone to Argentina. Yet in each case, Britain felt an obligation to ideological as well as civil order, whatever later befell.

The difference in Hong Kong was that the colony was rich and that wealth required Chinese acquiescence. When the time came for handover talks in 1984, an onset of British liberal conscience threatened that acquiescence. The Hong Kong establishment was horrified. Foreign Office Sinologists in the 1980s, like their Arabist brothers, showed their machismo by their attachment to the deeper philosophies of their adopted land. To them Hong Kong was not a colony thirsty for autonomy but a Chinese merchant city under brief British trusteeship. Ruling Hong Kong was none of Britain's business, or rather it was business and nothing else. Levering China was unthinkable. When Mr Patten sought "any democratic elbow room I could find", the Sinologists were appalled.

Mr Patten emerges from this book not as the ambitious popinjay of Foreign Office lore. He was naive and inexperienced, but he was also dumbfounded at the defeatism towards China of those who claimed to have Hong Kong's interests at heart. Worse, many of his new enemies were old friends. Against him were Lord Howe of Aberavon and Lord Young of Graffham (both for Cable and Wireless), Lord Prior (for GEC), Michael Heseltine (for the DTI) and the massed diplomatic establishment. There were ambassadors and former governors, MPs and bankers. Did none of them believe in democracy and self-government? Would they not join Mr Patten in a crusade to which they and the West had been committed for half a century, to install democratic rights wherever in the world they could?

Apparently not. Mr Patten's only allies throughout were Douglas Hurd and John Major himself. Lord Hurd of Westwell could not understand his predecessor, Lord Howe, wanting deals with Beijing to be kept secret from Hong Kong's local leaders. Lord Prior, Lord Young and Sir Charles Powell could beat a path to the Governor's door, pleading for him to soften his proposals in the interests of their companies. Lord Young even assured the Governor that the "vast majority" of Hong Kong people were "entirely unpolitical" (a million had demonstrated against Tiananmen). Otherwise liberal men had their heads turned by the prospect of Chinese gold, as had the 19th-century opium cartels. Britain could not be fastidious in the face of the great god trade.

Mr Patten was to learn the might of this god. On the Court of Appeal, on the new airport, on visas, on extending the franchise, he was without friends the moment he crossed China. He finds that the Foreign Office has already surrendered points he thought he was still negotiating. Diplomats soothe Beijing's anguish when a Hong Kong opinion poll supports democracy. When the Governor tries to stop a Cradock mission to China, briefed by the Foreign Office against him, he is ignored. This book portrays a lonely defender of an outpost long ceded to the enemy, with friendly fire falling all around him.

Yet Mr Patten had his way. Certainly his half-democratic legislature has been disbanded, replaced by one to Beijing's liking. But that does not mean the democratic route should never have been tried. Not even the smoothest Sinologist could have suppressed Martin Lee and his allies in the Democracy Movement for five more years after 1992. Mr Patten co-opted them. As a result, Hong Kong passed to China as a more mature and cautious political community.

There has been none of Sir Percy's predicted chaos. The business community accused Mr Patten of ruining them. He overruled them, yet they have not been ruined. To put it mildly, some of them might stop on the way to the bank to offer him an apology. If the rich are richer than ever, it is thanks to his policy, against theirs. Hong Kong may not be a democracy, but it has had a taste of one.

That is the argument of this remarkable book. Mr Patten's accusation, via Dimbleby, is that his foes deceived Parliament, conspired to cheat six million people of their rights and used political influence for commercial gain. Worse, when British territory was at risk after Tiananmen Square, they were conspiring with the enemy. Perhaps, as the cynic says, treason is a matter of dates. But let us hear the dates. If the dignity with which Britain left Hong Kong last week is to survive, these charges should be answered.

THE TIMES DIARY

Have faith

MUEZZINS' cries and Buddhist chants will be ringing through the House of Commons if Donald Gorrie, the Liberal Democrat MP for Edinburgh West, succeeds in his plan to make the opening prayers said every day in the Commons multi-denominational.

"OK Mildred, I believe you. I'll buy you a fishing rod."

He is tabling an early day motion this week to get things moving, and claims the support of most of his party and many across the House.

The current form is for the Speaker's Anglican chaplain, Canon Donald Gray, to read a set number of prayers from the Book of Common Prayer for five minutes each day before the beginning of House business. The format has hardly changed since the Restoration.

Until now. "The Common Prayer Book prayers don't do much for me," says Gorrie, an elder in the Church of Scotland. "The words are the same every day. If we had a rota of ministers of all religions, we could have brand new prayers every day read out in different languages. It would be rather stimulating to start the day with Arabic or Hebrew." Canon Gray would maintain his pastoral duties but would have to wait his turn beside the Rabbis and Plymouth Brethren in the prayer rota.

Despite the modish feel to the idea, for some it smacks of the paralysingly correct *Thought for the Day* slot on Radio 4's *Today* programme. "The Church of England prayers are dignified and beautiful," says Lord St John of Fawsley, a former Leader of the House. "I can't imagine they'll get away with this." Canon Gray sounded too gloomy to comment.

Top hole

THRILLING news for foreign fans of P.G. Wodehouse: Norman Murphy, Wodehouse scholar, is preparing a concordance to the master's works. "I got the idea while giving a lecture in Texas," says Murphy, who, with his tommy-gun delivery and floppy dark hair, looks like a useful nabber of policemen's helmets, "when someone asked me what was a collar-stud and what were spats."

Beyond the sartorial, Murphy hopes to parse the various popular sayings, advertising jingles and songs which Wodehouse would drop in to his works. "Wodehouse used the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer a great deal," says Murphy, "but two lines in a popular song from New York in 1900 can be a devil to find." Perhaps most excitingly, Murphy promises to reveal the identity of the inspiration for Lord Emsworth. "It's eluded me for 30 years," he says. "You must wait for the book to find out."

● *William Hague's campaign to bring the average age of Tory Members down from 62 to below his own age has received a boost from Hague's own fiercely ambitious PPS, David Lidington, the MP for Aylesbury. On Tuesday his wife gave birth to twins, Edward and James, who are already on the list of prospective future members of Lidington's local party.*

Red hot

CONGRATULATIONS to Jeanette Winterson, the novelist and critic, who has just sold her first screenplay. It is an adaptation of her own novel from 1987, *The Passion*.

The buyer is Miramax, the brash Amercian film company behind the blood-strewn works of Quentin Tarantino. Fortunately it has experience of more highbrow stuff, having also poured money into *The English Patient*.

● *Doug Henderson, the Minister for Europe, is paying a price for his attention to his physical well-being. Each morning he goes jogging through St James's Park. When he returns to the Foreign Office, however, where he has an office overlooking the Durbar Court, he has terrible trouble getting into the building. His problem? He has nowhere to keep his security pass in his running kit.*

Winterson: in the money

Tum trouble

TOO much globetrotting and summitry, not to mention trying to keep up with President Clinton, has had its effect on the waistlines of the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary. Guests at Robin Cook's party in the Foreign Office on Thursday evening confirmed that he was looking "porky".

The PM, meanwhile, once an enthusiastic exerciser, is now reduced to a few sets of tennis on Saturday mornings at RAF Halton near Chequers. He is thickening conspicuously around the waist as a result.

"The impression is made worse by a new light-grey, Neil Hamilton-style suit he has bought," says one observer. "His trousers have begun to swoop under his tummy," (a common effect depicted in my diagram).

Downing Street, however, is keen to assert the PM's vigour. "I think that anyone who can travel 26,000 miles and go to four summits in the first few weeks of office cannot have a fitness problem," says one of Blair's spokesmen. How about releasing regular details of Blair's weight and cholesterol levels, as the White House does for Clinton? The Downing Street telephone went dead.

Blair: corporation taxed

P·H·S

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AN OMINOUS DELAY

Are ministers already losing their taste for openness?

There was a pretty irony in yesterday's programme for Parliament. As MPs debated "the information society", with a minister making worthy noises about the "important social as well as economic dimensions to the information revolution", the Government admitted that its White Paper on Freedom of Information was not now to be published this month, but would have to be delayed until the autumn.

Ministers indignantly denied reports that civil servants had been holding them up. If officials have indeed been speedy on this issue, that would in itself be a surprise. Whitehall is famous for its culture of secrecy. In this department more than any other, "Yes, minister" is liable to mutate into "Not yet, minister" and, eventually, "Are you really sure, minister?". A long enough delay, they might hope, could help to dent the enthusiasm that politicians felt about freedom of information in Opposition.

But no, we are told, it is the ministers' own fault that the White Paper is not ready to be published. The timetable that they imposed on themselves was too tight. They have not been able to devote enough time to scrutinising the draft that officials have prepared, based on a speech that Tony Blair gave in Opposition. Other issues, they say, have been given higher priority.

This could be an ominous sign. First, we were led to expect a Freedom of Information Bill in the first parliamentary session. Then it was bumped off the list, with the promise of an early White Paper, followed by a draft Bill. Now the early White Paper has turned into a late White Paper. Conspiracy theorists might legitimately suspect that ministers have already been captured by their office.

For this would not be the first time that the best of intentions have paved the road to inaction. In 1974, the last time that an incoming Labour Government had the chance to enact a manifesto pledge to bring in freedom of information, the idea was quietly dropped. At each election since then, the same promise has been made. Now at last it can be enacted. But will it?

The case is stronger now than ever before. The last Government, tainted by the machinations uncovered by the Scott inquiry, made an attempt to open up Whitehall. But the code was weak, and public faith in the workings of government remained low. This Government is passionate about modernisation: what better candidate than the one institution left almost untouched by the Thatcherite and Majorite reforms of the 1980s and 1990s?

Labour's claim that there has been too little time to consider this matter rings hollow. The party has had 18 years of Opposition, 23 years since it first undertook to take action. In the meantime, there have been Private Member's Bills, hours of parliamentary debate and endless seminars on the subject. Mr Blair himself is sensitive to the dangers of temptation to dilute once in power. At a Campaign for Freedom of Information awards ceremony last year, he said: "People often say to me today, 'Everyone says this before they get into power, then after they get into power. . .' I actually believe that if we want to make government effective in the modern world, it simply is not possible to do that on the basis of Government just handing down tablets of stone."

All the more reason, then, for his administration to make this a high priority. Many Bills conceived in haste are repented at leisure. But freedom of information is one of the few issues best tackled quickly, before ministers start to enjoy the power that secrecy affords them. If it is not a high priority now, it ought to be.

THE MANDELA EFFECT

South Africa remains on the road to reconciliation

One year after his triumphant state trip, Nelson Mandela has been a welcome visitor to Britain again this week. For part of his three-day tour he has played the role of consort to Graca Machel who received an honorary degree from Essex University on Thursday. Yesterday Mr Mandela spoke in his own right at Oxford. The South Africa to which he returns has made steady progress since he appeared with Betty Boothroyd at the Palace of Westminster and walked with the Prince of Wales in Brixton market.

Much of the credit for this lies with the President himself — the symbol of his country both at home and abroad. He is now within a week of his 79th birthday and two years from political retirement. He has gradually transfered his duties to Thebo Mbeki, his Deputy President and probable successor. In an African context, the willingness of a leader both to serve only a limited period of office and to share authority while doing so is unique. The means by which Mr Mandela relinquishes power may prove as important to South African democracy as the manner in which he left prison.

The Mandela presidency has been devoted to the theme of reconciliation: not only between races but within them. The most pressing issue facing South Africa after the move to majority rule in 1994 was the violent division between supporters of the ANC and Chief Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). Their rivalry had left more than 12,000 dead in KwaZulu/Natal, and rendered that province, South Africa's largest, all but ungovernable. Until recently the ANC regarded the IFP as an entirely illegitimate force, simply created for the convenience of apartheid. The tentative agreement between the two camps represents an astonishing transformation in their relationship.

Tensions between black and white South Africans, although visible, have also eased. The task of raising the living standards of the poor majority while reassuring the remaining wealthier minority was destined to involve difficulties. In certain areas, notably education, where the colour division in the quality of facilities enjoyed is especially stark, maintaining a national consensus has proved arduous. Nonetheless, the "white flight" that at one stage threatened to become a stampede has abated.

In large degree this is because the business community has stayed. That in turn reflects increased confidence in the country's future. The ANC was elected on a hopelessly impractical economic platform that it has progressively abandoned. Outside investors have been reassured by the programme that emerged in its place. The last South African budget included cuts in spending, taxation and borrowing. Exchange controls were relaxed further. The telecommunications industry became the first partial privatisation this spring. A Finance Minister once associated with Marxism produced the sort of package many in the City of London urged on Gordon Brown.

Law and order — easily the most pressing domestic problem — remains a major impediment to South Africa's prospects. Criminal violence has risen at the same time as political violence has fallen. That reflects the easy availability of offensive weaponry. The fear this engenders also has a destructive effect on trade and tourism. Reversing that trend is the most significant task of Mr Mandela's remaining tenure. Despite that, three years on, the ambition of a "rainbow nation" retains real substance as well as a compelling image. That is certainly what Mr Mandela would want as his legacy.

THE FRAGRANT ANGLER

Taut lines, midge cream and pheromones for the best fishers

Izaak Walton, the patron saint of fishing, declared that he was a brother of the angle. But today, as compulsively as trout to mayfly, the question rises whether there can also be sisters of the angle. For Des Taylor is writing about women and fishing again in *Angling Times*. And for "the voice of angling" women are as welcome as cormorants on the riverbank or mink in the salmon river. According to him, women chatter about things other than fish and fishing. They let their children run riot, they embarrass male anglers while they are at their swearing, exaggeration and other macho activities, and their very sex distracts fishermen from their proper function.

While Mr Taylor was giving his new gloss on coarse fishing, Johnny Briggs was taking a swing at women golfers. Mr Briggs is the actor who plays Mike Baldwin in *Coronation Street*, a character famous for his uncouth opinions. So to slice soap opera into the real rough, he described women golfers as treacherous and an abomination on the course, and compared them to cockroaches. Now Mr Briggs's former wife says: "He thinks women should be in the kitchen cooking his dinner and then get ready in bed wearing a long nightie."

These majestically politically incorrect views do not represent the considered opinion of the four million people in Britain who admit to fishing regularly or the rather fewer who claim to play golf. They reinforce the image of fishing as a jerk on one end of a line waiting for another jerk at the other, and of golf as an insult to lawns. They are factually wrong. In Finland yesterday in the European ladies team championship, Scotland took a vice-like grip on their match against England. Half a world away in Sapporo, Japan, other choice and mistress lady golfers were competing for 50 million yen.

Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother is the most celebrated fisherwoman. And the record for the king of game fish, the salmon, is still held by Miss G. W. Ballantine for the 64-pounder she landed from the Tay in 1922. Fishwives have a reputation for fishermanly invective. And Shakespeare made Cleopatra call for her angle to go fishing. But then he also had her playing billiards 15 centuries before that clubman's ballgame was invented. And the traditional virtues required for both fishing and golf — patience, calm, precision, neatness, unflappability — are not exclusively masculine.

It is no more persuasive to ban women from fishing than to say that sitting on a damp bank or hacking in an inescapable bunker necessarily make a man a curmudgeon. Many male fishers and golfers show almost feminine grace in adversity. And in the fertile folklore of fishing, some say that fish are attracted by female pheromones. It is possible that this week's outbursts are the first recorded examples of pheromone rage. In any case, there are still plenty of lonely banks and roughs for the solitary fisher king to escape to from his troubles, and from the company of either sex.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

'Unfair' to assume guilt of Serbs

From Sir Alfred Sherman

Sir, While congratulating you and your fellows in the British media on giving fair showing to both sides in the controversy over the hunting of foxes, I regret that not the slightest trace of this fairness has been shown (reports, July 11) towards the hunting of Serb patriots by Nato occupation forces in Bosnia and the Marches (Krajina).

For centuries now the Orthodox Christian Serbs have been subjected to genocide, enforced conversion (to Islam or Western Christianity) and ethnic cleansing by the most reactionary forces — Islam, the Western Church and German imperialism, now reinforced by the hegemonism of the United States.

No one is allowed a word on their defence. A new weasel phrase, "indicted war-criminal", has been invented to circumvent that age-old dictum of innocence until guilt is proven. Now, as with socialist show-trials, indictment is taken as automatically equivalent to guilt. Think of the further potential ramifications.

Yours faithfully,
ALFRED SHERMAN,
14 Malvern Court,
Onslow Square, SW7.
July 11.

From Mr Adam Hibbert

Sir, Whether or not one supports the UN's rather selective crusade against "war criminals" (leading article, July 11), it would seem prudent to remember that the norms of justice require a due process of evidence and judgment before the summary execution of untried suspects; that even with The Hague inquisition's blinkers it has been impossible to avoid the recognition that all sides in the war were driven to extremes; and that even if we were underestimating the scale of atrocity in Bosnia, there can be no justification for drawing parallels with the Holocaust, a comparison that reduces the lessons of the latter to a trite caution against tribal bickering.

Yours,
ADAM HIBBERT,
21 Hillfield Avenue, N8.
July 11.

Island economy

From Mr Jonathan Tolson

Sir, Mr Robert Young (letter, July 7; see also letter, July 11) asks why the economic miracle, if it is that, of Hong Kong has not been repeated here.

At least part of the answer may lie in the very different situation to be seen in the British dependency of St Helena. Hong Kong happened because of its adjacency to the mainland of China and the burgeoning economies of the Pacific Rim. Britain was probably as good a colonial ruler as any other would have been, but it was the émigrés from China who came to the fore in the last three decades who made it happen.

So how goes St Helena? Very poorly, it would appear, as there seems to be a distinct lack of interest in its prospects now it has served its purpose as a maritime staging-post and it has no adjacency or natural resource to exploit.

If the British want to show the international audience what can and should be done to improve an island economy then surely St Helena should have a Governor who will roll up his, or her, sleeves to work for the St Helenians as a chief executive, to argue their corner and lead the island to a viable and democratic future. Assuming Mr Patten doesn't want another turn, might there be someone who became available on May 1 to take on the task?

Yours faithfully,
JONATHAN TOLSON,
Ford Hollow Farm,
Withiel Florey, Minehead, Somerset.

Hong Kong diplomacy

From Sir Alexander Waddell

Sir, I was astonished to read Mr Andrew Stuart's description of those who preceded Lord Maclehose as Governor of Hong Kong as a "succession of particularly dim colonials" (letter, July 7).

It so happens that, as a member of HM Colonial Service, I had the privilege of serving at various times in the Pacific and Far East with those so maligned. Sir Alexander Grantham was Governor of Hong Kong 1947-1957, Sir Robert Black 1958-64 and Sir David Trench 1964-71, which must be the "succession" to which Mr Stuart refers so disparagingly.

All were men of the highest ability and outstanding administrators with wide experience in other territories as well as in Hong Kong. Each in turn presided over the tremendous economic and social advances in Hong Kong following the devastation of the Second World War, leading to the economic "superstate" of recent years.

It is regrettable, and to me distasteful, that Mr Stuart, a diplomat, should have seen fit to describe these officers, distinguished in the service they gave in war as in peace, in such terms, and in effect to disparage the administrations of which they were the head.

Yours faithfully,
A. N. A. WADDELL,
Pilgrim Cottage,
Ashton Keynes, Wiltshire.
July 7.

Abbey restoration: is it craft or art?

From Mr James Dunnett

Sir, Restoration work at Westminster Abbey over the past few years has been carried out to a high level of craftsmanship. But with the commission of carved statuary for the principal portals, the question arises of when craft should give way to art.

The 14 niches around the west entrance of the Abbey — the principal entrance on state ceremonial occasions and for the public on a daily basis — have been empty at least since 1654, and there is no evidence that they were ever filled.

They were recut by Hawksmoor in the early 18th century, but remained empty until the four flanking the entrance were filled by statues of the Virtues three years ago.

Preparatory models have now been made to fill the remaining ten niches with lifesize figures of 20th-century martyrs, including Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Archbishop Romero of San Salvador. This work is in the hands of the firm of conservation contractors in Cambridge who were responsible for the Virtues.

Such a commission would, in times gone by, have been the summit of the career of a Ghiberti or a Donatello. Without wishing to detract from the professional and conscientious work of the contractors, is an artist not required?

The present divorce between artists and craftsmen is much to be regretted, but to erect sculpture without the vitality that only an artist can bring is to risk the deadness eloquently deplored by William Morris in the case of the north portal of the Abbey more than a century ago.

The proposed figures should be capable of standing comparison with those on the west front of Wells or Exeter, or even Chartres. That there are sculptors today capable of such a task, as Epstein or Frink might have been, is not impossible. Until they are found, the niches had arguably best remain empty.

Yours sincerely,
JAMES DUNNETT,
James Dunnett Architects,
142 Barnsbury Road, N1.
July 8.

Countryside rally

From Dr Clive Layton

Sir, Today I attended the Countryside rally in Hyde Park. There I met 100,000 other people.

No one was hurt, no property was vandalised; these gentle people were expressing their desire for their way of life to be understood and tolerated.

Your leading article, "Rural marchers", this morning was correct in stating that hyperbole has no place in the arguments in favour of continuing hunting. But surely we must draw a line between, on the one hand, expressing disapproval, displeasure or even disgust at an activity indulged in and enjoyed by many others and, on the other hand, making criminals of a substantial proportion of our population.

Do our urban neighbours really want that? Is it right that those of us who live in the countryside and participate in country sports, and, in some cases, have families who have done so for generations, should be told that these activities are criminal? I have friends and neighbours whose whole lives might, if Mr Michael Foster's *Bill* is enacted, be deemed to have revolved around a criminal activity. How divisive can we become?

This is not an argument either for, or against, hunting. It is a strong argument against replacing the power of discussion and persuasion by the heavy hand of the law.

If our urban compatriots, and indeed some of our rural ones, feel so strongly then by all means come and argue the case. Open debate, friendly and peaceful persuasion are valid tactics and, who knows, the result may not be so easily foreseen.

There is no role for Parliament, the law or violent argument in this arena.

Yours etc,
CLIVE LAYTON,
Woodview,
Abbess Roding, Ongar, Essex.
layton@softlay-software.demon.co.uk
July 10.

From Mr Ivan Massow

Sir, This week has witnessed impressive demonstrations by two honourable causes. I don't suppose many people will have attended both the Gay Pride and the Countryside marches, but both events assert the same important principle: this is a free country.

Many people find homosexuality distasteful; probably the majority of the population do not want to have much to do with it. The same is true of country sports. But neither gay sex nor fox-hunting does harm to other people. Those who want to engage in either should be free to do so.

Yours faithfully,
IVAN MASSOW,
7 Meard Street, W1.
July 11.

From Mr Mark Bourgeois

Sir, I've just returned from Hyde Park. A lovely place to stroll on one's lunch break. There are tens of thousands of people gathered. I couldn't help but be surprised at the lack of ground litter that one normally expects at such events. Who are these people who obviously have so much respect and caring for the outdoors?

Yours faithfully,
MARK BOURGEOIS,
9 Tremadoc Road, SW4.
July 10.

Probation supervision

From the Assistant Chief Probation Officer of Essex Probation Service

Sir, The Home Office report on the number of convicted criminals being charged with murder or serious offences while under the supervision of probation officers (details, July 2), places the Probation Service in a very difficult position. Publicising its work with dangerous offenders runs the risk of unjustifiably raising the fear of crime in an already alarmed public. On the other hand, the Probation Service should not be defensive.

The harsh truth is that virtually *all high-risk offenders, who are already* known to the courts, police, prisons and psychiatric services, come to the Probation Service at some stage. They are released on licence from the prisons, for example, whether they get parole or not. Those whom the Parole Board consider too risky or dangerous to give parole will be released eventually and passed straight to the Probation Service.

Offenders who are severely mentally disordered are still put on probation inappropriately by the courts. The service also supervises many drug users. People in these categories can be volatile and unpredictable.

The vast majority of offenders are supervised successfully and safely, and the community is not exposed to danger. Through prompt action, probation officers avoid an enormous number of serious incidents, by spotting danger signs and recalling prisoners on parole, without publicity. They work unprotected, using their training and skills to keep offenders from committing more crime.

The 204 serious incidents in the 13 months to December 1996 reported by the Probation Service to the Home Office represent one tenth of one per cent of the 200,000 cases under our supervision during that time. The service can never be complacent, however: when mistakes are made and shortfalls occur, we will account for them and take appropriate action.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN BUDD,
Assistant Chief Probation Officer,
Essex Probation Service,
Cullen Mill,
49 Braintree Road, Witham, Essex.
July 4.

As old as you feel

From Mr J. W. Scott

Sir, By describing Camilla Parker Bowles, aged 49, as being "in late middle-age", Jane Shilling (article, July 8) may be betraying the number of her own years, since middle-age is, throughout life, always about ten years older than you are yourself. I am slightly older than Mrs Parker Bowles and, from my own viewpoint, she has yet to reach even early middle-age.

However, if middle-age is also defined as the time when you have either achieved your every ambition or come to terms with the fact that you will not do so, then I think that Jane Shilling herself, judging by the tone of her article, would agree that the phrase was inappropriate.

Yours faithfully,
JONATHAN SCOTT,
Merton Grange, Wheelers Lane,
Bearwood, Bournemouth, Dorset.

Weekend Money letters, page 41

Letters may be faxed to
0171-782-5046.
e-mail to: *letters@the-times.co.uk*

Opera House plans

From Mr John Crompton

Sir, I am rather puzzled by one of the fundraising initiatives suggested by the chairman of Covent Garden (report, July 7).

Lord Chadlington puts forward the idea of a shop selling a large range of items associated with the Opera House. He seems to have overlooked the fact that the House used to have a large shop in James Street selling precisely this sort of merchandise. It opened in the late 1980s as part of the development at the rear of the theatre, and was closed some years ago as a cost-*saving* measure.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN CROMPTON,
14 Donovan Avenue, N10.

From Mr Gavin Roebuck

Sir, Lord Chadlington expresses his determination to create the "people's opera". Well what about the ballet? Under his chairmanship is it going to remain the junior partner in the new *Covent Garden*?

Yours faithfully,
GAVIN ROEBUCK,
51 Earls Court Square, SW5.
July 7.

A real devotion to virtual pets

From Mrs Nicola Kenny

Sir, I, too, have fallen into the trap of thinking the *Tamagotchi* "cyber pet" was the answer to all my problems (letter, July 7; see also letters, July 8). Not having the time to devote to cats, dogs, rabbits, etc, I actively encouraged my two children to have cyber pets.

I now find myself taking both pets to work (they are forbidden at school) where, in between answering telephones, typing, etc, I have to feed, discipline, play and look after them.

The beeping has caused chaos in the office, with people running around looking for mobile phones. The worry about "killing" one while the children are at school has put years on my life.

Yours faithfully,
N. KENNY,
16 Pyotts Copse,
Old Basing, Basingstoke, Hampshire.
July 10.

From Mrs L. C. J. Aldwinckle

Sir, Some children at the junior school where I am a secretary secretly bring their electronic pets to school. If discovered, a *Tamagotchi* is confiscated and sent to the office for safe keeping until going-home time.

Should I look after them or not? School rules forbid both animals and electronic games but it is hard to shut the desk drawer on a virtual menagerie, electronically indicating the imminence of its virtual expiry.

I am proud to say that none has died yet.

Yours faithfully,
LUCY ALDWINCKLE,
107 Woodwarde Road, SE22.

From Mr Philip A. R. James

Sir, At my daughter's school there is a thriving *Tamagotchi* babysitting service whereby the "nannies" pay the "parents" to look after them.

So far the fee has not reached the original provider.

Yours faithfully,
PHILIP A. R. JAMES,
Snoadhill Cottage, Bethersden, Kent.

From Mr Andrew H. Hooper

Sir, Our daughter simply cleans, feeds and plays with her *Tamagotchi*. She then resets the time and puts it back to sleep for another 12 hours.

Yours faithfully,
ANDREW H. HOOPER,
Grove House, 6 Castle Grove,
The Park, Nottingham.

From the Reverend Anthony Luckcuck

Sir, I've not found myself holding the electronic baby; they are forbidden in our home.

But in the 11-year-olds' conversation on a recent school trip, I discovered an unexpected twist, which may be even more sinister than tending the *Tamagotchi*. It ran: "I've killed mine four times already, how often have you killed yours?"

Yours sincerely,
ANTHONY LUCKCUCK,
St. John's Vicarage,
261 Oakdale Road,
Carlton, Nottingham.
amleclerc@btinternet.com

From Mr Nicholas J. Huband

Sir, I was informed by a friend this weekend that there exists on the Internet a memorial Website for deceased *Tamagotchi*:
http://www.netzon.com/tamagotch/lament.html

I am forced to recognise a certain insane logic in a virtual memorial for a virtual pet.

Yours faithfully,
NICK HUBAND,
63 Thames Drive,
Leigh on Sea, Essex.
July 7.

Fruits of experience

From Mr Mark Ashford

Sir, I first encountered the phrase "going pear shaped" (letters, July 7 and 10) during flying training with the Royal Navy in the early 1980s and had therefore assumed it to be connected with military flying. Describing the result of an incorrectly executed manoeuvre such as a turn or a loop, perhaps?

Yours faithfully,
MARK ASHFORD,
79 Oliver Street,
Ampthill, Bedfordshire.
July 10.

Fast food

From Mr Adrian Brodkin

Sir, One of your advertisers today ("Great Sporting Offers") has an intriguing offer. A mere £595 plus VAT secures "Private Suite Hospitality *on starting grid* [their italics] including Complimentary Bar, Superb 4 course buffet lunch" for this Sunday's British Grand Prix at Silverstone.

Although dining on pole position is undoubtedly an exciting prospect, lingering over lunch (with the race due to start at 2pm) might not be altogether advisable on this occasion.

Yours faithfully,
ADRIAN BRODKIN,
93 Kingsley Way, N2.
July 7.

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COURT CIRCULAR

PALACE OF HOLYROODHOUSE
July 11: The Queen held an Investiture at the Palace of Holyroodhouse this morning.

The Lord Macfarlane of Bearsden KT, Lord High Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, was received by Her Majesty and reported on the recent proceedings of the General Assembly.

The Lord Macfarlane of Bearsden KT, with the Lady Macfarlane of Bearsden, remained to Luncheon with The Queen.

Mrs Mary Blake, Mrs Eileen Harrild and Mr Rodney Mayor, on behalf of his late wife Mrs Gwen Mayor, were received by The Queen when Her Majesty invested them with The Queen's Commendation for Bravery.

The Duke of Edinburgh this morning visited the Haig Homes Estate, Saughton Mains Street, Stenhouse, Edinburgh, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of the City of Edinburgh (Mr Eric Milligan, the Rt Hon the Lord Provost).

Mr Hugo Brunner (Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Oxfordshire) was present at Royal Air Force Brize Norton this evening upon the Departure of The President of the Republic of South Africa, who was accompanied by Mrs Machel, and bade them farewell on behalf of The Queen.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
July 11: The Duke of York this evening attended a Centenary Dinner given by the Marine Highland Hotel, Troon, Ayrshire.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
July 11: The Princess Royal this morning opened Shin-Etsu Europe Limited's new plant at Wilson Road, Toll Roundabout, Eliburn, Livingston, and was received by Her Masjesty's Lord-Lieutenant of West Lothian (the Earl of Morton).

Her Royal Highness later visited Bartholomew House, Duncan Street, Edinburgh, and was received by Mr Brian Fallon (Deputy Lieutenant of the City of Edinburgh).

The Princess Royal, Patron, the Scottish Business Achievement Award Trust, this afternoon attended the Annual Luncheon at Prestonfield House Hotel, Priestfield Road, Edinburgh, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of the City of Edinburgh (Mr Eric Milligan, the Rt Hon the Lord Provost).

Her Royal Highness, Patron, Citizens Advice Scotland, later visited Gorgie/Dalry Citizens Advice Bureau, Fountainbridge Library, Dundee Street, Edinburgh.

ST JAMES'S PALACE
July 11: The Prince of Wales this morning held an Organic Marketing Seminar and gave a Luncheon.

His Royal Highness, Patron, this evening attended a Dinner given by the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies at Wadham College, Oxford, in honour of The President of the Republic of South Africa.

KENSINGTON PALACE
July 11: The Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon, President, the Royal Ballet, this evening attended the Company's final performance at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London WC2.

KENSINGTON PALACE
July 11: The Duke of Gloucester this morning opened the Garden Suburb Open Air Theatre, Hampstead Garden Suburb, London NW11.

The Duchess of Gloucester today opened the Mobility Roadshow, Crowthorne, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of the Royal County of Berkshire (Mr Philip Wroughton).

Later Her Royal Highness, Patron, National Missing Persons Helpline, attended a Reception to mark the first National Conference on Craniofacial Identification at Cumberland Lodge, Windsor Great Park.

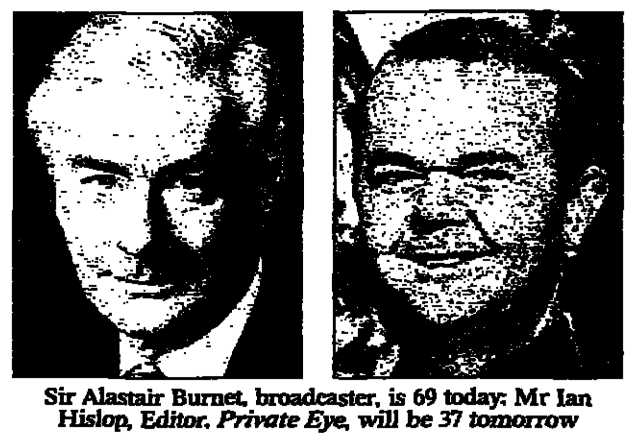
YORK HOUSE
July 11: The Duke of Kent, President-in-Chief, the British Racing Drivers' Club, this morning attended free practice of the British Grand Prix at Silverstone Circuit, Silverstone, Towcester, Northamptonshire.

THATCHED HOUSE LODGE
RICHMOND PARK
July 11: Princess Alexandra this morning opened the new Science Department and Music Centre of Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Faversham, and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Kent (the Lord Kingsdown KG).

Her Royal Highness this afternoon visited the Kent County Show at the County Showground, Detling, Kent.

Weekend birthdays

TODAY: Mr A.G. Bamford, former Principal, Homerton College, Cambridge, 67; Mr John Bullock, former joint senior partner, Coopers & Lybrand, 64; Mr Peter D. Carr, former chairman, Occupational Pensions Board, 67; Lord Cuckney, 72; Dr Jean Curtis-Raleigh, psychiatrist, 64; Mr Gareth Edwards, former rugby player, 50; Dame Mary Glen Haig, honorary life president, British Sports Association for the Disabled, 79; Sir Arthur Hetherington, former chairman, British Gas Corporation, 86; the Rev Philip Holdsworth, former Master, St Benet's Hall, Oxford, 76; Mr M.G. Matthews, former director, Royal College of Music, 66; Lord Quirk, FBA, 77; Baroness Ramsay of Cartvale, 61; Miss Jennifer Saunders, comedienne, 39; Sir Harold Walker, former MP, 70.



Sir Alastair Burnet, broadcaster, is 69 today; Mr Ian Hislop, Editor, *Private Eye*, will be 37 tomorrow

TOMORROW: Sir David Blatherwick, diplomat, 56; Mr Thierry Boutsen, former racing driver, 40; Professor D.S. Brewer, former Master, Emmanuel College, Cambridge, 74; Mr Lee Copperwheat, fashion designer, 31; Sir James Craig, diplomat, 73; Mr Colin Cullimore, former chairman, Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes, 66; the Earl of Devon, 81; Mr Moss Evans, trade unionist, 72; Mr Harrison Ford, actor, 55; Mgr Alfred Gilbey, 96; Mr Larry Gomes, cricketer, 44; the Earl of Gosford, 55; Vice-Admiral the Hon Sir Nicholas Hill-Norton, 58; Mr Chris Holmes, director, Shelter, 55; Mr Peter Job, chief executive, Reuters Holdings, 56; Sir Philip Jones, chairman, Total Oil Marine, 66; Lord Kenyon, 50; Mr Peter Kindersley, chairman, Dorling Kindersley, 56; Judge Kenneth Machin, QC, 61; Vice-Admiral Sir Gerard Mansfield, 76; Professor Sir Ghillean Prance, FRS, director, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, 60; Brigadier Dame Jean Rivett-Drake, former director, WRAC, 88; Dr Patricia Rodgers, diplomat, 49; Mr Patrick Stewart, actor, 57; Mr David Storey, dramatist, 64; the Rev Professor A.C. Thiselton, theologian, 60; Professor Jeff Thompson, educationist, 59; Sir Garfield Todd, former Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, 89; Professor Sir Bernard Tomlinson, pathologist, 77; Viscount Torrington, 54; Mme Simone Veil, former MEP, 70.

Anniversaries

TODAY

BIRTHS: Julius Caesar, Roman statesman, Rome, 100 BC; Josiah Wedgwood, potter, Burslem, Staffordshire, 1730; Sir William Osler, physician, Bondhead, Ontario, 1849; George Eastman, pioneer of photography, New York, 1854; F.E. Smith, 1st Earl of Birkenhead, Lord Chancellor 1919-22, Birkenhead, 1872; Amadeo Modigliani, painter, Leghorn, 1884; Kirsten Flagstad, soprano, Haman, Norway, 1895; Oscar Hammerstein II, songwriter, New York, 1895; Pablo Neruda, poet and diplomat, Nobel laureate 1971, Parral, Chile, 1904.

DEATHS: Jack Cade, rebel leader, Heathfield, Sussex, 1450; Desiderius Erasmus, scholar, Basle, 1536; Jean Picard, astronomer, Paris, 1682; Richard Cromwell, Lord Protector 1658-59, Cheshunt, Hertfordshire, 1712; Robert Stevenson, civil engineer, Edinburgh, 1850; Gertrude Bell, traveller, Baghdad, 1926; Mazo De La Roche, novelist, Canada, 1961.

King Henry VIII married Catherine Parr, his sixth, and last, wife, 1543.

Turkey ceded Cyprus to Britain, 1878.

The Panama Canal was opened, 1920.

TOMORROW

BIRTHS: Wenceslaus Hollar, engraver, Prague, 1607; John Clare, farm labourer and poet, Helpston, Northamptonshire, 1793; Patrice MacMahon, President of France 1873-79, Auton, 1808; Sir George Gilbert Scott, architect, Gawcott, Buckinghamshire, 1811; Sidney Webb, Baron Passfield, co-founder of the London School of Economics, London, 1859; Kenneth Clark, Baron Clark, art historian, London, 1903.

DEATHS: Titus Oates, Protestant plotter, London, 1706; James Bradley, astronomer, Chalford, Gloucestershire, 1762; Jean Paul Marat, revolutionary, murdered by Charlotte Corday, Paris, 1793; John Charles Frémont, explorer, New York, 1890; Alfred Marshall, economist, Cambridge, 1924; Vladimir Jabotinsky, Zionist leader, New York, 1940; Arnold Schoenberg, composer, Los Angeles, 1951; Sir Seretse Khama, 1st President of Botswana 1966-80, London, 1980; Kenneth More, actor, London, 1982.

The Treaty of Berlin (Peace with Honour) was signed, 1878.

The first World Cup football contest was held in Montevideo, Uruguay, 1930.

Europe accepted Marshall Aid, the American plan to help European recovery after the Second World War, 1947.

A power failure blacked out New York, 1977.

Church news

Appointments

Canon Trevor Willmott, Canon Residentiary and Sacrist of Peterborough Cathedral (Peterborough): to be Archdeacon of Durham and Residentiary Canon of Durham Cathedral (Durham).

The Rev Terence Pigrem, Priest-in-Charge, Abbess Roding and Beauchamp Roding w White Roding (Chelmsford): to be *also* Rural Dean of Dunmow (same diocese).

The Rev Susan Shipp, Vicar, Longwell Green and Ecumenical Officer for Bristol Archdeaconry: to be *also* Honorary Canon of Bristol Cathedral.

The Rev Paul Taylor, Vicar, St Andrew, Southgate (London): to be Vicar, St Mary, Hendon and Christ Church, Hendon (same diocese).

Canon Glyn Webster, Senior Chaplain, York Health Services NHS Trust, York District Hospital (York): to be *also* Rural Dean of York.

Retirements and resignations

The Rev Trevor Beedell, Director of Christian Stewardship (Derby) to retire October 12.

The Rev Brian Bessant, Vicar, Frimley Green (Guildford) to retire September 30.

The Rev Tod Dalton, Rector, Norton Sub Hamdon, West Chinnock, Chiselborough and Middle Chinnock (Bath & Wells) to retire October 31.

The Rev Rodney Stone, Vicar, St Barnabas, Winchester (Winchester) to retire September 30.

The Rev Colin de Fraine Tickner, Rector, Ockley, Okewood & Forest Green (Guildford) to retire August 31.

The Rev Tom Unsworth, Chaplain, St John the Evangelist, St Raphael, France (Europe) to retire November 1.

The Rev John Williams, Priest-in-Charge, Kedington (St Edmundsbury & Ipswich) to retire September 30 and to be Chaplain, to the Community of St Katharines Parmoor, High Wycombe (Oxford).

Withdrawal of Acceptance

The Rev Derek Chandler has withdrawn his acceptance of the post of Team Vicar, Melton Mowbray Team Ministry and Framland Deanery Youth Chaplain (Leicester).

Forthcoming marriages

Mr Z. Avramov
and Miss J. West

The engagement is announced between Zoran, only son of Mr and Mrs Djordje Avramov, of Belgrade, and Juanita, youngest daughter of Mrs W.A. West and the late Professor W.A. (Tony) West, of South Kensington, London.

Mr R.J. Blackham
and Miss A.S. Ord

The engagement is announced between Robin, son of Mr and Mrs Thomas Geoffrey Blackham, of Tadmarton, Oxfordshire, and Amanda Samane, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs Anthony Ord, of Malpas, Cheshire.

Mr D. Blaikley
and Mlle L. Marlio-Marette

The engagement is announced between David, younger son of Mrs Dawn Blaikley-Colwill, of Paignton, Devon and the late Mr Bruce Blaikley, and Laure, daughter of Mme Marie-Renée Marlio-Marette, of Versailles, France, and the late M Bernard Marlio-Marette.

Mr J.M. Breaks
and Miss S.L. Crisp

The engagement is announced between Jonathon, younger son of Mr and Mrs M.R. Breaks, of Hale Barns, Cheshire, and Sarah, daughter of Dr and Mrs J.J. Crisp, of Sutton Poyntz, Dorset.

Mr A.W. Gosnay
and Miss C.L. Thornton

The engagement is announced between Andrew William, only son of Mrs Ann Gosnay, of Leeds and the late Judge Maxwell Gosnay, and Claire Louise, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Harry Thornton, of Ossett, West Yorkshire.

Mr G.G. Graham
and Miss E.J. Millar

The engagement is announced between Gordon, youngest son of Mr and Mrs Joseph Graham, of Kings Langley, Hertfordshire, and Emma, second daughter of Mr and Mrs Deighton Millar, of Charlton Horethorne, Somerset.

Mr W.E.S. Jewson
and Miss E.F. Quigley

The engagement is announced between William, son of Mr and Mrs Richard Jewson, of Barnham Broom, Norfolk, and Esther, elder daughter of Mr Maurice Quigley, of Bexley, Kent and the late Mrs Quigley.

Mr A.S. Justham
and Miss R. Bello

The engagement is announced between Alexander, younger son of Mr and Mrs Rex Justham, of Streatley, Berkshire, and Raquel, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs José Antonio Bello, of Madrid, Spain.

Mr R.K. Semple
and Miss J.R. O'Brien

The engagement is announced between Robert, son of Dr and Mrs Semple, of Glasgow, and Jo-Ann, daughter of Professor and Mrs O'Brien, of Nottingham.

Mr A. Watt
and Miss C. Pearcey

The engagement is announced between Andrew, elder son of Mr Michael Watt and the late Mrs Susan Watt and stepson of Mrs Zandra Watt, of Greens Park, Towcester, Northamptonshire, and Caroline, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs James Pearcey, of Bath.

Marriages

Sir Anthony Reeve
and Mrs S. Doull

The marriage took place in Oxford, on Friday, July 11, of Sir Anthony Reeve, of Horsley, Gloucestershire, and Mrs Susan Doull, née Collins, of Durban, South Africa.

Mr M. Grenier
and Miss E. Turner

The marriage took place on Saturday, July 5, 1997, at Eton College Chapel, Eton, Berkshire, between Mr Michael Grenier, youngest son of Mr and Mrs David Grenier, of Guildford, Surrey, and Miss Emma Turner, daughter of the late Professor Paul Turner, CBE, MD, and of Mrs Katie Turner, of Ascot, Berkshire.

Mr E.G. Wale
and Miss J. Gorman

The marriage took place on July 5, 1997, at St Mary's Church, Acton, Cheshire, of Mr Edward George Wale, son of Captain and Mrs Derrick Wale, of Leicester, to Miss Joanne Gorman, daughter of Mr John K. Gorman and Mrs Ann Gorman.

The bride was attended by Mrs Victoria Wells, Miss Dawn Johnson, and Emily and Hollie Wells. Mr Richard Shepherd was best man.

Church services tomorrow

Seventh Sunday after Trinity

ST ANDREWS CATHEDRAL, ABERDEEN: 8 HC; 10.15 S Euch, Merbecke; 6.30 EP.

ARMAGH CATHEDRAL: 10 HC; 11 M, Lead me Lord (Wesley), Mr D McGuckin; 3.15 E.

BELFAST CATHEDRAL: 10 HC; 11 S Euch, Holy, Holy, Holy (Schubert), I sat down (Bairstow); 3.30 E, Murrill in E, O Thou the central orb (Wood).

BIRMINGHAM CATHEDRAL: 9 MP; 9.15 HC; 11 Ch Euch, Missa brevis in D (Mozart), O taste and see (Vaughan Williams), Rev V Cory; 4 Ch E, Responses (Rose), Watson in E.

BLACKBURN CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.15 Ch M, Teach me O Lord (Attwood), Canon Galilee; 10.30 Euch, Messe Solonelle (Langlais), Canon Hall; 4 Ch E, Ascribe unto the Lord (Wesley), Canon Galilee.

BRECON CATHEDRAL: 8 Euch; 11 Euch, Missa brevis de sancti Joannis de Deo (Haydn); 3 Civic Service

BRISTOL CATHEDRAL, College Green: 7.40 M; 8 HC; 10 Ch Euch, Missa brevis in B flat (*Mozart*), Ave verum (Elgar), Canon P Johnson; 3.30 Ch E, Responses (Leighton), Brewer in D, The Dean.

CADEIRLAN BANGOR CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 11 Ch Euch, Little Organ Mass (Haydn), Ave verum (Elgar); 3.15 Ch E, Evening Service in F (Aston), Hear, O thou shepherd of Israel (Mathias).

CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.30 M; 11 S Euch, God be in my head (Radcliffe), The Dean; 3.15 E, Responses (Clucas), Stanford in B flat; 6.30 Compline.

CARLISLE CATHEDRAL: 10.30 S Euch, Assumpta Est Maria (Palestrina), Vidi speciosam (*Vittoria*); 3 EP.

CHELMSFORD CATHEDRAL: 7.30 MP; 8 HC; 9.30 Euch, Canon D Knight; 11.15 S Euch, Responses (Rose), Britten in C, Canon D Knight; 6 Ch E, Responses (Rose), Rubbra in A flat, Bishop of Bradwell.

CHESTER CATHEDRAL: 7.45 L; 8 HC; 10 Ch Euch, Aeterna Christi Munera (Palestrina), O Lord, give thy Holy Spirit (Tallis); 11.30 Ch M, Responses (Jackson), Te Deum (Byrd), Canon O Conway; 3.30 Ch E, Responses (Smith), The Spirit of the Lord (Elgar); 6.30 ES.

CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 M; 11 S Euch; 3.30 E.

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL, Oxford: 8 HC; 10 M, Britten in C, The Archdeacon; 11.15 S Euch, Messe Solenelle (Langlais), O sacrum convivium (Messiaen), Canon O'Donovan; 6 E, Stanford in A, Blessed city (Bairstow).

COVENTRY CATHEDRAL: 7.40 MP; 10.30 Euch, Stanford in C & F, O Lord give Holy Spirit (Tallis), Canon C Lamb; 5 E, Responses (Clucas), Wood in E flat.

DERBY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10.45 S Euch, Missa brevis (Walton), Jehova quam multes (Purcell), Rev R Parsons; 6 Ch E, Responses (Leighton), Wood in E flat, A Flintham.

DURHAM CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 11.15 HC, Collegium Regale (Howells), Rev G Forbes; 3.30 E, Howells in B minor, Give unto the Lord (Elgar).

ELY CATHEDRAL: 8.15 HC; 10.30 S Euch, Vaughan Williams in G minor, Sing joyfully (Byrd), Rev B Down; 3.45 E, Magnificat Primi Toni (Palestrina), Nunc Dimittis (Sarum).

EXETER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.45 S Euch, O taste and see (Williams), Stanford in C & F, Canon A Mawson; 11.15 M, Collegium Regale (Howells), Cantate Domino (Monteverdi), Rev G Daxter; *3 E, Bairstow in D, How lovely is thy* dwelling place (Brahms); 6.30 ES, For lo, I raise up (Stanford), Canon D Ison.

GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL: 8, 12.15 HC; 10.15 Euch, Stanford in C, Mrs C Pascoe; 3 E, Tantum ergo (Duruflé), Vox dicentis (Naylor).

GUILDFORD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.45 S Euch, O taste and see (Vaughan Williams), The Dean; 11.15 M, Jubilate (Walton), They that go down to the sea (Purcell), Canon G Jones; 6.30 E, Canon J Schofield.

HEREFORD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 Euch, Collegium Regale (Howells), Here, O my Lord (Whitlock), The Succentor; 11.30 M, Stanford *in B flat, Gowland in G; 3.30 E, Wood in E flat,* O thou, the central orb (Wood).

LEICESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 M; 10.30 S Euch, Flocks in pastures (Bach), The Chancellor; 4 EP.

LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10.30 Euch, Mass in G (Schubert), A: Hymn to St Cecilia (Howells), The Bishop; 3.30 E, Responses (Rose), Collegium Regale (Howells).

LINCOLN CATHEDRAL: 7.45 L; 8, 12.30 HC; 9.30 S Euch, Darke in E, Give us the wings of faith (Bullock), Rev J Pavey; 11.15 M, Stanford in B flat; 5 EP.

LIVERPOOL CATHEDRAL: 8 MP; 10.30 Euch, *Canon M Boyling; 3 E, The Dean; 4 HC.*

LLANDAFF CATHEDRAL: 7.30 M & L; 11 S Euch, Schubert in C, Blest are the pure in heart (Webb), Rev N H Brown; 12.15 Euch; 3.30 Ch E, Gray in F minor, Hear my prayer (Mendelssohn); 6.30 E & S

MANCHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8.45 M; 10.30 S Euch, Missa sancti Nicolas (Haydn), Canon J Atherton; 6.30 E, I was glad (Parry), Responses (Stewart), The Dean.

NEWCASTLE CATHEDRAL: 7.30 M; 8 HC; 9.30 S Euch, Jackson in G, The Lord bless you and keep you (Rutter), Canon R Best; 6 Ch E, Stanford in C, Responses (Ayleward).

NEWPORT CATHEDRAL: *10.30 M, Responses* (Sumsion), Stanford in B flat, Archdeacon of Monmouth; 6.30 E, Have mercy upon me (Tomkins), Rev S Lodwick.

NORWICH CATHEDRAL: 7.30 MP; 8 HC; 10.30 S Euch, Missa brevis (Leighton), O sacrum convivium (Messiaen), The Archdeacon; 3.30 E, Stanford in A, Lo, the full final sacrifice (Finzi), Canon R Hanmer.

PETERBOROUGH CATHEDRAL: 7.45 M & L; 9 Euch, Sumsion in F, K Mackay; 11 Family Service, Hymn to St Cecilia (Howells), Antiphon (Vaughan Williams); 5.30 E.

PORTSMOUTH CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.30 C, Canon J Hedges; 11 S Euch, O taste and see (Vaughan Williams), Salve regina (Poulenc), The Provost; 6.30 E, Rev M Macvicar.

RIPON CATHEDRAL: 8 Euch; 8.45 M; 9.30 Euch, O Lord, give thy holy spirit (Tallis), Canon J Bell; 11.30 Ch Euch, Like as the hart (Howells), Rev D Murfet; 5.30 E, Responses (Rose), Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis (Wood).

ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.45 M, Responses (Reading), *Stanford in C; 10.30 S Euch, Leighton in D, Canon P Avanti; 3.15 E, If ye love me* (Tallis), Wood in D.

SALISBURY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10 Euch, Collegium Regale (Howells), Let all mortal flesh keep silence (Bairstow), Canon D Slater; 11.30 M, Sumsion in B flat, Responses (Shephard), Dr D Downing; 3 E, Responses (Shephard), Murrill in E.

SHEFFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 10.30 S Euch, Canon G Tolley; 6.30 E, Ven S Lowe.

SOUTHWARK CATHEDRAL: 9 Euch; 11 Ch Euch, Messe Solennelle (Vierne), The Lord bless you and keep you (Rutter), Rev R White; 3 Ch E, Collegium Regale (Howells), For lo, I *raise up (Stanford), Rev D Painter.*

SOUTHWELL MINSTER: 7.30 M & L; 8 HC; 11 S Euch, Schubert in G, Be still, *my* soul (Ashfield), The Provost; 3.15 E, Collegium Regale (Howells), Great is the Lord (Elgar).

TRURO CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9 M; 10 S Euch, Little Organ Mass (Haydn), Rev D Thurburn-Huelin; 6 E, Responses (Smith), Rejoice in the Lord alway (Purcell), The Chancellor.

WAKEFIELD CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.15 C, Canon R Gage; 11 S Euch, Mass for Two Choirs (Widor), Ave verum corpus (Mozart), Bishop R George of Guyana; 6.30 E, Responses (Bielby), Kelly in C, Canon R *Capper.*

WESTMINSTER ABBEY: 8 HC; 10 M, Responses (Tallis), Te Deum (Tomkins), Canon D Hutt; 11.15 Euch, Schubert in G, O true bread (Vann), Where thou reignest (Schubert), The Dean; 3 E, Service in five parts (*Weelkes*), *Rev D Tillyer*; 6.30 ES, The Dean.

WINCHESTER CATHEDRAL: 10.30 M, Te Deum in C (Stanford), *Locus iste* (Bruckner), Rev A K Walker; 11.30 S Euch, Mass in E flat (Rheinburger), Fugue in D (Bach); 3.30 E, Howells in B minor, Responses (Shephard), The Dean.

YORK MINSTER: 8 HC; 8.45 HC; 9.30 M; 10 S Euch, Canterbury Service (Moore), Rev D Sheppard; 4 E, How lovely is thy dwelling.

ST ALBANS CATHEDRAL, Hertfordshire: 8 HC; 9.30 Euch, Sicut cervus (Palestrina), Rev M Tavinor; 11 S Euch, Missa brevis (Kodaly); 6.30 E, Responses (Clucas), Wesley in E, Canon Ritson.

ST ASAPH CATHEDRAL, Clwyd: 8 HC; 11 Ch M, Cantique de Jean Racine (Fauré), Rev C A Mitchell; 3.30 EP.

ST DAVIDS CATHEDRAL: 8 HC; 9.30 Euch; 11.15 Ch M, Stanford in A, Lord, we beseech thee (Batten), How beauteous are the feet (Stanford).

ST EDMUNDSBURY CATHEDRAL: 8 HC, Canon M Mingins; 10 S Euch, Missa parodia (Treple), Ave Maria (Schubert), Rev I Mann; 3 Multiple sclerosis service, Responses (Rose), Brewer in D.

ST GEORGE'S CATHEDRAL, Southwark: 8, 10, 6 LM; 11.30 SM, Rev J Boyle; 3 Ordinations to Priesthood

ST GILES' CATHEDRAL, Edinburgh: 8 HC; 10 HC, Missa brevis (Gabrieli), The Minister; *11.30 MS, Exultate Deo (Palestrina),* The Minister; 8 ES, Rev J Williams.

ST MACHAR'S CATHEDRAL, Old Aberdeen: 11, Rev D Molyneaux; 6, Rev D Molyneaux.

ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL, London: 8 HC; 8.45 M; 11 S Euch, Schubert in G, Richte mich, Gott (Mendelssohn), Canon S Oliver; 3.15 E, Insanae et vanae curae (Haydn), Rev Helen Cunliffe.

RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL, Ennismore Gardens, London, SW7: 10.30 Divine Liturgy, Kievan and traditional polyphony, Met Anthony.

ALL SAINTS, Margaret Street, W1: 8, 5.15 LM; *10.20 MP; 11 HM, Harmoniemesse (Haydn),* Rev Dr J Morris; 6 E & B, The Fifth Service (Tomkins), The Vicar.

ALL SOULS, Langham Place, W1: 11 Rev R Trist; 6.30 Rev R Tice.

THE ASSUMPTION, Warwick Street, W1: Missa O quam gloriosum (Vittoria), Ave Maria (Verdi).

CHELSEA OLD CHURCH, SW3: 8 HC; 11 M, Sing ye praises to our King (Copland), Rev D P Elvy; 12.15 HC; 6 E, Mr D Royce.

CROWN COURT CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, Covent Garden, WC2: 11.15 Rev S Hood; 6.30 Rev S Hood.

FARM STREET, W1: 8, 9.30, 12.30, 4.15, 6.15 LM; 11 HM.

HOLY TRINITY BROMPTON, Brompton Road, SW7: 9 HC, Rev S Downham; 11 MS, Rev S Millar

THE ORATORY, Brompton Road, SW7: 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 Mass, Heiligmesse (Haydn), Cantate Domino (Monteverdi), 12.30, 4.30, 7; 3.30 V & R.

ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH, Iverna Gdns, W8: 11 Holy Mass, Archbishop Y Gizirian.

WESLEY'S CHAPEL, City Road, EC2: 9.45 HC; 11 MS, Rev Dr L Griffiths.

WESTMINSTER CENTRAL HALL (Methodist), SW1: 11, 6.30.

ST BARTHOLOMEW THE GREAT, Smithfield, EC1: 9 HC; 11 Ch Euch, Missa O quam gloriosum (Victoria), The Rector.

ST BRIDE'S, Fleet Street, EC4: 11 Ch M, Jubilate (Gardner), Ireland in C, Canon J Oates; 6.30 Ch E, Responses (Rose), Stanford in C, Canon J Oates.

ST CLEMENT DANES: 11 Ch M, Britten in C, When David heard (Tomkins), Rev P Bishop.

ST COLUMBA'S CHURCH OF SCOTLAND, Pont Street, SW1: 11 Rev J H McIndoe; 6.30 Rev A Cairns.

ST ETHELDREDA'S, Ely Place: 11 SM, Asperges Me (Palestrina), Lied (Vierne).

ST GEORGE'S, Hanover Square: 8.30 HC; 11 S Euch, Rheinberger in E flat, The Rector.

ST JAMES'S, Piccadilly: 8.30 HC; 11 S Euch, Rev H Valentine; 5.45 EP.

ST JOHN'S, Stratford E15: 11 Family Service, Rev J Richardson.

ST LUKE'S, Chelsea, SW3: 8 HC; 10.30 HC, Welcome sweet and sacred feast (Finzi), Rev C Kevill-Davies; 6.30 E, Beati quorum via (Stanford), Rev C Kevill-Davies.

ST MARK'S, Regents Park Rd, NW1: 8 HC; 10.30 Euch, Ireland in C, Ave verum (Mozart), Rev A Ramahalefitra.

ST MARGARET'S, Westminster, SW1: 11 S Euch, Rev Dr P Bradshaw.

ST MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS, WC2: 8 HC; 9.45 Euch; 5 Ch E; 6.30 ES.

ST MARY-THE-VIRGIN, Primrose Hill: 8 HC; 10.30 Euch, Like as the hart (Howells), Rev L van der Pump.

ST MARYLEBONE, Marylebone Road, W1: 8 HC; 11 Ch Euch, Missa Maria Magdalene (Lobo), The Rector.

ST MICHAEL'S, Cornhill, EC3: 11 Ch Euch, Ave verum corpus (Byrd), Four part Mass (Byrd), Ven G Reid.

ST PAUL'S, Wilton Place, SW1: 8, 9 HC; 11 S Euch, Missa brevis (Gabrieli), O sacrum convivium (Croce), Rev N Dawson.

ST PETER'S, Eaton Square, SW1: 8.15 HC; 11 S Euch, Missa brevis (Palestrina), Laudamus te (Bach), Fr D B Tillyer.

ST SIMON ZELOTES, Milner St, SW3: 8 HC; 11 M, Te Deum in F (Ireland), The Spirit of the *Lord (Elgar), Rev P Hancock; 6.30 E, Rev P* Hiney.

CHAPEL ROYAL OF ST PETER AD VINCULA, HM Tower of London: 9.15 HC; 11 M, Responses (Tomkins), Te Deum (Chant), Rev P Abram.

CHAPEL ROYAL, St James's Palace: 8.30 HC; 11.15 MP, Thy word is a lantern (Purcell), Canon E Buchanan.

CHAPEL ROYAL, Hampton Court Palace: 8.30 HC; 11 M, Sing joyfully (Byrd), 3.30 E, Watson in E, They that go down to the sea (Sumsion).

QUEEN'S CHAPEL OF THE SAVOY, WC2: 11 M, Te Deum (Cole), The Heavens are telling (Haydn), Mr J Lang.

GRAY'S INN CHAPEL, 8 South Sq, WC1R: 11.15 Divine Service.

THE TEMPLE CHURCH, Fleet Street: 8.30 HC; 11.15 MP, Responses (Ratcliffe), Te Deum laudamus (Leighton), Rev J Paul.

GUARDS CHAPEL, Wellington Barracks, SW1: 11 M, Christ within me (Beethoven), The God of Israel (Rossini), Rev L Bryan; 12.00 HC.

ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE CHAPEL, Greenwich, SE10: 11 Ch Euch, Collegium Regale (Howells), Cantique de Jean Racine (Fauré), Rev C French.

Royal engagements this weekend

TODAY:

The Duke of York will present the prizes at the Loch Lomond Golf International at the Loch Lomond Golf Club, Luss, Dunbartonshire, at 11.30.

The Duke of Kent, as Patron, Kent County Cricket Club, will attend the Benson and Hedges final against Surrey County Cricket Club, Lord's Cricket Ground, at 11.30.

TOMORROW:

The Duke of York will take part in the Roxburghe Golf Challenge Match in aid of Cancer Relief Macmillan Fund at the Roxburghe Golf Course, at 2.00.

Dinner

Royal College of Radiologists

Professor Anthony Pinching delivered the 41st Crookshank lecture to the Royal College of Radiologists at a ceremony for the admission of new fellows held yesterday at the college. Professor Jean-Claude Horiot and Professor Herman Suit were admitted as honorary fellows.

Dr M.J. Brindle, president of the college, was the host at the Crookshank dinner held afterwards at the Royal College of Physicians in honour of Professor Pinching. Professor Horiot and Professor Suit

Service dinner

RAF St Athan

Air Chief Marshal Sir John Allison, Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief Logistics Command, was dined-out last night from RAF St Athan by Air Commodore P.J. Scott, Station Commander and Air Officer Wales, and Officers of RAF St Athan. Wing Commander J.S. Alton presided.

Vintners

The following have been installed officers of the Vintners' Company for the ensuing year:

Master, Mr F.C.D. Berry Green; Upper Warden, Mr P.E. Cooper; Renter Warden, Mr A.J. Buchanan; Swan Warden, Mr D.B. Butler-Adams.

Cordwainers

The following have been installed officers of the Cordwainers' Company for the ensuing year:

Master, Mr R.P.B. Skinner; Senior Warden, Mr J.G. Church; Second Warden, Dr R.K.H. Parker; Steward Warden, Mr C.E. Hamill-Stewart; Renter Warden, Mr J.C. Peal.

Appointment

Ms Alexandra Jones to be Chief Executive of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy.

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There are varieties of service but the same Lord. There are varieties of activity but in all of them and in everyone the same God is active. 1 Corinthians 12 : 5,6

BIRTHS

[illegible]

SAPPHIRE ANNIVERSARIES

[illegible]

DEATHS

[illegible]

ANNIVERSARIES

[illegible]

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

[illegible]

DEATHS

[illegible]

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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هكذا من الأصل

ALEXANDER CORDELL

Alexander Cordell, novelist, was found dead in a stream near Llangollen, North Wales, on July 9 aged 82. He was born in Colombo, Ceylon, on September 9, 1914.

An incongruous figure to be espousing Welsh radical causes, with his military moustache and clipped British Army manner, Alexander Cordell nevertheless made a reputation both in and outside Wales for a series of novels depicting the sufferings endured by the dwellers of the South Wales Valleys during the Industrial Revolution. This began with the highly coloured *Rape of the Fair Country*, which appeared in 1959 and was an immediate popular success. The other titles of what became a trilogy, *The Hosts of Rebecca* (1960) and *Song of the Earth* (1969), built for Cordell a strong following, and this was sustained by a second trilogy which he published during the 1970s and 1980s.

These books were very far from winning him the approval of the Welsh literary establishment which suspected him of dishing up a shamelessly sentimentalised portrait of Welsh working-class life — complete with over-egged funny accents and prurient sex — for the purposes of commercial gain. Cordell in his turn robustly assailed the Welsh Arts Council and its grant-subsidised writers.

He particularly condemned poets as a useless breed, and when, in the 1970s, the late John Tripp tried to stand up for himself and fellow practitioners of the art of verse, Cordell went for him in the letters columns of the *Western Mail*, pointing out that no one had ever heard of Tripp while he, Cordell, enjoyed an international reputation.

Tripp (who has his own permanent niche in *Penguin Modern Poets*, besides having published several slim volumes of his own) defended himself in the same paper, pointing out that for modern poets commercial success, as a popular novelist understood it, was not the sole criterion of merit. On behalf of his fellow poets he declined to be "driven over by Mr Cordell's Jaguar and brisk, military mannerisms".

Cordell was, perhaps, on firmer ground when he attacked the Welsh Arts Council for awarding a £1,000 International Writer's Prize to the French playwright Eugène Ionesco, when there was little enough money to go round to support home-grown authors. But he can hardly have been surprised when the council did not look favourably on his proposal that it should fund an Alexander Cordell prize for novelists.

Nevertheless, though a British Empire born and bred Englishman, Cordell developed a sincere regard for his adoptive country. In his later years he espoused many causes relating to the preservation of the environment and the attempt to stem the decay of rural life and the erosion of the Welsh small community.

Alexander Cordell was born George Alexander Graber in Colombo, the son of a regimental sergeant major in the Royal Engineers. As an army child he had a peripatetic upbringing and was partly educated by the Marist Brothers in Tianjin. Following in his father's footsteps he, too, joined the Royal Engineers as soon as he was old enough, and rose to the rank of major during the Second World War.

Demobilised in 1965, he worked for the Civil Service as a quantity surveyor in the Monmouthshire valleys. But he had privately determined to become a successful writer, and it was the history of old iron towns, such as Tredegar and Ebbw Vale, that provided him with the impetus for his work.

A first novel, *A Thought of Honour* (1954), disappeared without trace, but with *The Rape of the Fair Country* he opened his account in earnest. In its graphic tale of capital versus labour in the iron foundries of the Monmouthshire valleys during the Industrial Revolution, it inevitably invited comparison with Richard Llewellyn's earlier *How Green Was My Valley* and its depiction of the impact of coalmining on the rural communities of South Wales.

In fact, Cordell did not really have Llewellyn's gift for catching the lilt and idiom of English as it is spoken by Welshmen (Llewellyn was, of course, Welsh born). And although he had done impressive research on the book's themes — the struggle for trade union rights, Chartism, the harshness of working conditions — a lush romanticism tended to be all-pervading. In the treatment of sex — young Welsh women were inevitably portrayed as wild and lusty — there was an uncomfortable approach to what has subsequently become known as the "bodice-ripper".

But, however much Welshmen might cavil at this portrait of themselves and their lack of control over their libidos, *The Rape of the Fair Country* enjoyed huge popularity. Its successors, *The Hosts of Rebecca*, which depicted the Rebecca Riots of West Wales in which insurgent gangs dressed up as women, and *The Song of Earth*, in which mineworkers escape from their environment by becoming bargemen, established for Cordell a solid popularity among devotees of the "good read".

Cordell now branched out. *Race of the Tiger* (1963) applied his saga style to events in famine-stricken 19th-century Ireland, following the fortunes of a brother and sister who are forced to emigrate from Connemara to America. Cordell's experience of the Far East was also drafted into the service of fiction. *The Sinews of Love* (1965) was set in Hong Kong; *The Bright Cantonese* (1967) was an espionage thriller about the threat of nuclear war between the United States and China; and *The Dream and Destiny* (1975) described Mao's Long March of the 1930s.

There was a feeling among reviewers that none of these quite did justice to Cordell's undoubted narrative gifts and it was to some relief among his faithful following that he turned back to Welsh industrial history for a second trilogy. This consisted of *The Fire People* (1972) about the 1831 Merthyr Tydfil rising; *This Sweet and Bitter Earth* (1977), which dealt with social and industrial unrest at Penrhyn and Tonypandy in the late Victorian and Edwardian eras; and *Land of my Fathers* (1983), a return to the Chartist period. Cordell published many other books and at the time of his death was working on a novel about the medieval Welsh prince Owain Glyndwr.

Cordell was an active member of the Welsh Nationalist Party, Plaid Cymru, and campaigned vigorously for self-government for Wales. He was also vociferous on the closing of rural schools, on proposals for new opencast coalmines in the Vale of Neath and on a host of other environmental issues.

Since the death of his second wife Donnie in 1995, Cordell had led a largely reclusive life. He is survived by the daughter of his first marriage to Rosina Wells, who died in 1972.

HELENE PROPPER DE CALLEJON

Hélène Propper de Callejon, writer and artist, died on June 28 aged 89. She was born on October 22, 1907.

A TOTAL cosmospolitan, Hélène Propper de Callejon, or "Bubbles" as she was generally known, was a writer, an artist and a generous hostess throughout her husband's diplomatic career. In later years her home in Chelsea lacked nothing but a crystal ball to convince the most astute observer that he had walked into a luxurious three-storeyed gypsy caravan.

She was an attentive and demanding mother and an inspirational grandmother and friend to many people. These latter extended from Peter, the roadsweeper, to the Chelsea Pensioners round the corner, to the staff she fought with good-naturedly, through those who sought her help for depression (her devotees as she called them) to the great and the good. She looked with tenderness, ecumenical curiosity and an exuberant kindness on all those around her, an attitude which lost nothing for requiring in exchange some recognition of her own gifts.

She was the eldest daughter of Baron Eugene Fould and Mitzi Springer, an heiress in her own right. She grew up in the *belle époque* settings of her parents' beautiful homes, with their ceremonies and celebrations, their obligations and distances.

As a child and young woman she was not best served by circumstances which gave her great material comforts but little emotional stability. Her mother, Mitzi, was a capable, if domineering, woman of charm (who liked to sit up all night to watch Muhammad Ali beat Sonny Liston for the world heavyweight championship). She ran her husbands, children and businesses like a conglomerate, where time (her time), ambitions and convenience were highly prioritised.

At Meidling, their cavernous and theatrical summer home (now headquarters of an Austrian political party), in Hungary and in France, between the Palais Abbatial at Royaumont and 54 avenue d'Iena in Paris, Bubbles and her siblings were brought up, mostly by English nannies.

At the age of 18 she was given her first exhibition in Paris, with Jean Cocteau and Max Jacob, adopting "Praday" as a pseudonym. After the Second World War she published two collections of her poetry in Paris — *Croquis* and *Album*, and another volume *Absents de Nous Même*, which contained her thoughts on depression, and advice on how to come through it. She successfully completed a memoir entitled *I Loved My Stay* just two days before she died.

In 1929 Bubbles married the Spanish diplomat Eduardo Propper de Callejon. After ably supporting his distinguished career — from helping Jews to escape Nazism through to chargé d'affaires and ambassadorial posts in Washington, Ottawa and Oslo — they retired to live in London.

Bubbles was beautiful and admired as such, but to a gifted and sensitive girl this had never been enough on which to build both a character and a career. She writes in her memoirs of coming into her mother's room to say good morning, and being offered a hand to kiss. Her mother rarely turned her head to acknowledge her but, when she did, it was to rearrange the famous curls. It was not surprising, therefore, that Bubbles started life by tending more diligently to the outer than to the inner woman in order to gain her parents' approbation. Consequently, it was all the more impressive that in later life, after her husband's death, and through periods of deep sadness, she set about the task of learning how to live again, and to discover, and put to use, the best in herself.

"To live in hearts we love, is not to die" was a phrase she noted down in one of her books, adding that she was not sure if she had plagiarised the quote, but was quite sure that she believed in it. For all her creative gifts, developed and honed with constantly sought-for comments from her family, she will be remembered most of all for her human generosity, and a talent to identify with those with whom she came in contact. People laughed more with her; they shone when she succumbed to teasing.

She learnt to live vicariously in the best sense of the word. She would wait impatiently for regular reports on Felipe, her son, and his varied activities. Her daughter Elena became a psychotherapist, and Bubbles, with indomitable curiosity, added what she could learn from this to her own repertoire. One granddaughter, Helena Bonham Carter, became a film actress, and Bubbles, with panache, took on stardom, but her genius lay in allowing people to become themselves for her. This could be mistaken for vanity sometimes, a desire for flattery, a need for compliments and perhaps these things were all there; but the difficulties were born only from her overwhelming need to share, and participate in, the lives of those who mattered to her.

Sometimes her participation seemed invasive; sometimes she could seem more child than mother, but if her insecurities occasionally surfaced, her innocence and *joie de vivre* lent light and sweetness to all she touched.

She is survived by her son Felipe and her daughter Elena Bonham Carter.

MIGUEL NAJDORF

Miguel Najdorf, international chess grandmaster, died on July 6 aged 87. He was born on April 15, 1910.

MIGUEL NAJDORF was one of the great forces of chess, particularly during the late 1940s and early 1950s. He was possessed of an aggressive style, rich in imagination and always prepared for adventure. At his best he was a danger to the greatest. Sadly, his main ambition, that of winning the world championship itself, was denied to him. His own period of greatness coincided with the rise of the Soviet chess machine, which mass-produced grandmasters and top theoreticians through a state-supported system of chess tuition, competition and team effort.

A Jewish émigré from war-torn Europe, Najdorf, having fled Poland, had to make his own way in his newly chosen homeland of Argentina. Thrown entirely on his own resources, without a state apparatus to support him and, with the World Chess Federation heavily under the influence of the Soviet Union, and thus not particularly inclined to be charitable to a rival, Najdorf was never able to storm the absolute chess summit and assail successfully his Soviet opponents.

Nevertheless, he won the Argentine chess championship eight times and, by his presence and inspiration, he succeeded in making his adopted country one of the most forceful chess nations in the world. Najdorf won no fewer than 52 international tournaments and, whether in competition, friendly or simultaneous games, he managed to face all of the 13 world chess champions except for the very first one, Wilhelm Steinitz. Of the champions, he inflicted defeat on five — Botvinnik, Smyslov, Petrosian, Tal and Fischer.

In international team events he played in numerous chess Olympiads, at first for Poland and then 11 times for Argentina. As an ambassador for chess, for which role his outgoing and ebullient personality ideally suited him, he contested games against such personalities as Winston Churchill, Nikita Khrushchev, the Shah of Iran, Juan Perón, Fidel Castro and Che Guevara. Always the gentleman over the chess board, Najdorf regularly offered draws to such personalities after a few moves. These draws were usually eagerly accepted with the exception of Che Guevara, who was almost master strength himself in chess. Having declined the draw, Guevara went on to lose.

Najdorf's name, in spite of his numerous successes, may go down in chess history for the variation of the Sicilian Defence which he helped to popularise and which is now the favourite of the reigning world champion Garry Kasparov, as well as having been the preferred weapon of Bobby Fischer.

By the age of 25, Najdorf was already recognised as a serious player in the European chess environment. During the Buenos Aires Olympiad of 1939, while representing Poland, he sought asylum in Argentina and became an Argentine citizen in 1944. At that time he changed his first name from Moishe to Miguel. In Argentina he also made a fortune in the insurance business, which relieved him of the chessmaster's usual penury.

After the war Najdorf emerged as a leading tournament competitor, a position he maintained for a quarter of a century, winning first prizes at the tournaments of Prague and Barcelona in 1946, Venice in 1948, Bled and Amsterdam in 1950 and Havana in 1962. He was particularly deadly in the series of tournaments in Mar del Plata where he won outright in 1961, 1965 and 1968. In 1950 he won the prize for the best individual score on top board in the chess Olympiad.

While competing in serious tournaments Najdorf also felt it his duty to entertain the public. On one occasion in 1943 he played no fewer than 202 games at one and the same time while, later in the 1940s, he played an amazing 45 games at one and the same time without sight of any of the boards, registering a staggering performance of 39 wins, four draws and just two losses. In addition to this he was a brilliant "blitz" chess player, ready to take on all-comers at games of ten minutes' duration in total. To the end of his life he would offer large stakes to masters a fraction of his age.

Najdorf died in Malaga, Spain, after a lengthy illness. A chess lover to the end, he attended a chess exhibition given by Kasparov a week before his death.

He was twice married and is survived by one daughter of his second marriage.

PERSONAL COLUMN

TRUSTEE ACTS

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to s27 of the TRUSTEE Act, 1925 that any person having a CLAIM against or an INTEREST in the ESTATE of any of the deceased person's whose names, addresses and descriptions are set out below is hereby required to send particulars in writing of his claim or interest to the person or persons mentioned in relation to the deceased person concerned before the date specified; after which date the estate of the deceased will be distributed by the personal representatives among the persons entitled thereto having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

LOFTUS, PAUL FRANCIS JAMES of 17 The Glebe, All Cannings, Devizes, Wiltshire, died on 15th April, 1997 Particulars to SARJEANT & SHEPPARD Solicitor(s) of 150 Friar Street, Reading, RG1 1HE before 2nd October, 1997.

NIVEN, MARGARET GRAEME of 3 Broomhill, Sandhills, Godalming, Surrey GU8 5UF died on 30 March 1997 particulars to LAMB BROOKS ROCHE Solicitors of CHURCH STREET, ODIHAM, HAMPSHIRE RG29 1LX before 18 October 1997

RUMBOLD, HILDA of The Bitterne Park Rest Home, 58 Cobbett Road, Bitterne Park, Southampton SO2 4HL died on 20 June 1997 particulars to The Executor, Midland Bank Trust Company Limited, Probate Operations, 2nd Floor, Deacon House, 192 Eyre Street, Sheffield S1 3NG before 12 September 1997

WADDEN, KENNETH RUDOLPH of The Hollies, 77 Station Road, Cuffley, Potters Bar EN6 4EU died in or around September 1996 particulars to The Executor, Midland Bank Trust Company Limited, Probate Operations, 2nd Floor, Deacon House, 192 Eyre Street, Sheffield S1 3NG before 12 September 1997

OLD SCHOOL TIE

"TAN" KINGS Pupil 1962 - 1969. [illegible] 2/8 - 24/8/97. Contact Ray 01442 678933 for possible meet.

LEGAL NOTICES

No. 003147 of 1997
IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
CHANCERY DIVISION
COMPANIES COURT
IN THE MATTER OF THE JOHN LUSTY GROUP PLC
- and -
IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1985

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Petition was on the 24th day of June 1997 presented to Her Majesty's High Court of Justice for the confirmation of the reduction of the share capital of the Company from £5,197,876.04 to £4,258,750 and the reduction by £3,000,000 of the share premium account of the Company.
AND NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that the said Petition is directed to be heard before the Companies Court Registrar at the Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London WC2A 2LL on Wednesday the 30th day of July 1997.
ANY Creditor or Shareholder of the said Company desiring to oppose the making of an Order for the confirmation of the said cancellation of the Deferred Shares and reduction of the share premium account should appear at the time of the hearing in person or by Counsel for that purpose.
A copy of the said Petition will be furnished to any such person requiring the same by the undermentioned Solicitors on payment of the regulated charge for the same.
Dated the 10 day of July 1997
TRAVERS SMITH BRAITHWAITE
10 Snow Hill
London EC1A 2AL
Telephone 0171-248 9133
Fax: 0171-236 3728
Ref: PJS
Solicitors for the above-named Company

Notice of Intended distribution
BARNABY FOODS PLC
(In Administration and subject to a Company Voluntary Arrangement)
(Formerly Gillard Plc)
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that the supervisors of the company voluntary arrangement of the above-named company intend making a distribution to creditors. The creditors of the company are required, on or before 17 August 1997 to prove their debts by sending to the undersigned written statements of the amounts they claim to be due to them from the company and, if so requested, to provide such further details or produce such documentary or other evidence as may appear to the supervisors to be necessary. A creditor who has not proved his debt before the date mentioned above is not entitled to disturb, by reason that he has not participated in it, the intended distribution mentioned above or any other distribution declared before his debt is proved.
7 July 1997
Signed: M E Mills
Joint Supervisor of the Company Voluntary Arrangement of Barnaby Foods Plc
Becket House
1 Lambeth Palace Road
London
SE1 7EU

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PUBLIC NOTICES

IN THE HIGH COURT OF NEW ZEALAND
TIMARU REGISTRY
UNDER The Family Protection Act 1955
IN THE MATTER of the Estate of HAROLD PERCIVAL COWLES late of Oamaru in New Zealand, Retired Labourer
BETWEEN KRISTINA ANN ADAMS of Lot 5 Mount Lindsay Highway Laravale Via Beau Desert Queensland Australia, Married Woman Plaintiff
AND THE PUBLIC TRUSTEE OF NEW ZEALAND C/- The District Public Trustee 10 Coquet Street Oamaru Defendant
NOTICE TO MICHAEL ANTHONY COWLES BY WAY OF SUBSTITUTED SERVICE
Notice is hereby given that Michael Anthony Cowles whose whereabouts is unknown, son of the late Harold Percival Cowles Deceased, has an interest in the above proceeding. Copies of documents in the proceeding may be obtained by application to the Registrar High Court PO Box 514 Timaru New Zealand or the Plaintiff's Solicitor whose address appears below. Service on the said Michael Anthony Cowles shall be deemed to be effected 42 days from the date of the last publication of this notice.
Any person who knows the whereabouts of the said Michael Anthony Cowles is requested to bring this notice to his attention.
J G O'Neill
Solicitor for Plaintiff
Messrs O'Neill Devereux
Phone 0064 3 4776801
PO Box 1109 Dunedin
New Zealand

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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RSPB The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. Regd charity no 207076.

LEGAL, PUBLIC, COMPANY & PARLIAMENTARY NOTICES

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FAX: 0171 481 9313

Notices are subject to confirmation and should be received by 2.30pm two days prior to insertion.

WATERLOO SUBSCRIPTION.

ON THIS DAY

July 12, 1815

The Battle of Waterloo had been won but a number of problems were left in its wake

Yesterday a meeting of the inhabitants of Westminster was held in the Thatched House Tavern, St. James's, to take into consideration the propriety of appointing a committee to receive subscriptions for the relief and benefit of sufferers by the battle of Waterloo. Mr. Wilberforce said it would not be necessary for him to make any appeal to their feeling to fulfil the purpose for which they had met. They all knew how much was done, and how much was suffered. In other victories, however much our admiration might be excited, there might be some doubt with respect to the advantages of the result. In the present instance there could be no such doubt. Every one present, every man, every rank, every class in the country, felt their security increased by the issue of the battle of Waterloo.

When a question was asked with regard to the intention of including the Hanoverians and Belgians as sharers in the charity that should be raised, it seemed to be expressed generally by the meeting, that, as fighting under Lord Wellington and contributing to the success of the various battles, they should not be neglected, though our own countrymen had the first claim upon our sympathy and charity. Mr. Rowcroft said that in the draught [sic] of the City Resolution the "British Army" had been mentioned, which left the destinations of their subscriptions open to liberal construction. The Duke of Wellington was agreed to be the most proper person to decide who should be included. Mr. Rowcroft, from the City, stated that a letter had been received from Prince Blücher, mentioning that he had fought two battles, taken two forts, and masked two more in eight days; but that his army had suffered much, that he recommended his wounded Prussians to the liberality of the British, and begged that Mr. Wilberforce's charitable efforts might be solicited. A liberal subscription was immediately entered into.

On the 25th Buonaparte applied to the Provisional Government of France for two frigates which were immediately granted. Passports for his voyage to the United States were asked of the Duke of Wellington, who replied from his headquarters: "As to what regards a passport and protection for Napoleon to go to the United States: I must inform your Excellency that I have no authority from my Government to give any answer whatsoever to that demand".

(signed) WELLINGTON.

THE TIMES TODAY

SATURDAY JULY 12 1997

NEWS

Loyalists condemn 'parade sell-out'

■ Moderate Orangemen faced a backlash from hardline Unionists after cancelling or redirecting four of today's July 12 parades. Dissidents within the Orange Order condemned the gesture as a sell-out to the IRA, and urged Unionists to pull out of peace talks. The Belfast County Grand Lodge called on all Unionist politicians to "unite and immediately withdraw from the 'talks process' " .... **Pages 1, 2**

Military bases may be used as jails

■ Six sites owned by the Ministry of Defence are being considered for conversion into emergency accomodation for low-risk offenders to deal with the rising prison population threatening to engulf jails in England and Wales .... **Page 1**

Debts on sale

David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, launched the Government's first privatisation with a Bill to raise £3.1 billion by selling student loans debt .... **Page 1**

Freedom on hold

Ministers have postponed measures to increase freedom of information because of the complexity of the issues .... **Page 4**

Cut-price Internet

Schools could get unlimited use of the Internet for £1 a pupil a year under plans by the telecommunications watchdog .... **Page 5**

Parents smart

Parents are already paying a growing share of their children's higher education bill .... **Page 9**

Mould sold

A smudge of mould from the culture used by Sir Alexander Fleming when he discovered penicillin in 1928 was sold in an auction lot that fetched £14,950 .... **Page 10**

Health victory

A multiple sclerosis victim won a legal fight after a health authority refused to fund £10,000-a-year treatment .... **Page 11**

Gay clergy

Many bishops have knowingly ordained or employed practising homosexual clergy, a survey is expected to disclose .... **Page 12**

Kenya threat

Kenya's Opposition vowed to disrupt elections if the Government blocks reforms .... **Page 16**

SAS 'assassins'

Bosnian Serbs claimed British SAS units assassinated Simo Drljaca, the indicted war crimes suspect .... **Page 17**

Germans 'on target'

The German Government announced it would fulfil precisely on target the economic and monetary union public spending goal .... **Page 18**

Male anglers bait women on river bank

■ War between the sexes broke out in the world of fishing with a broadside by a leading British angler against "distracting and inhibiting" women on the riverbank — in the week a *Coronation Street* actor called women golfers "cockroaches" .... **Page 1**

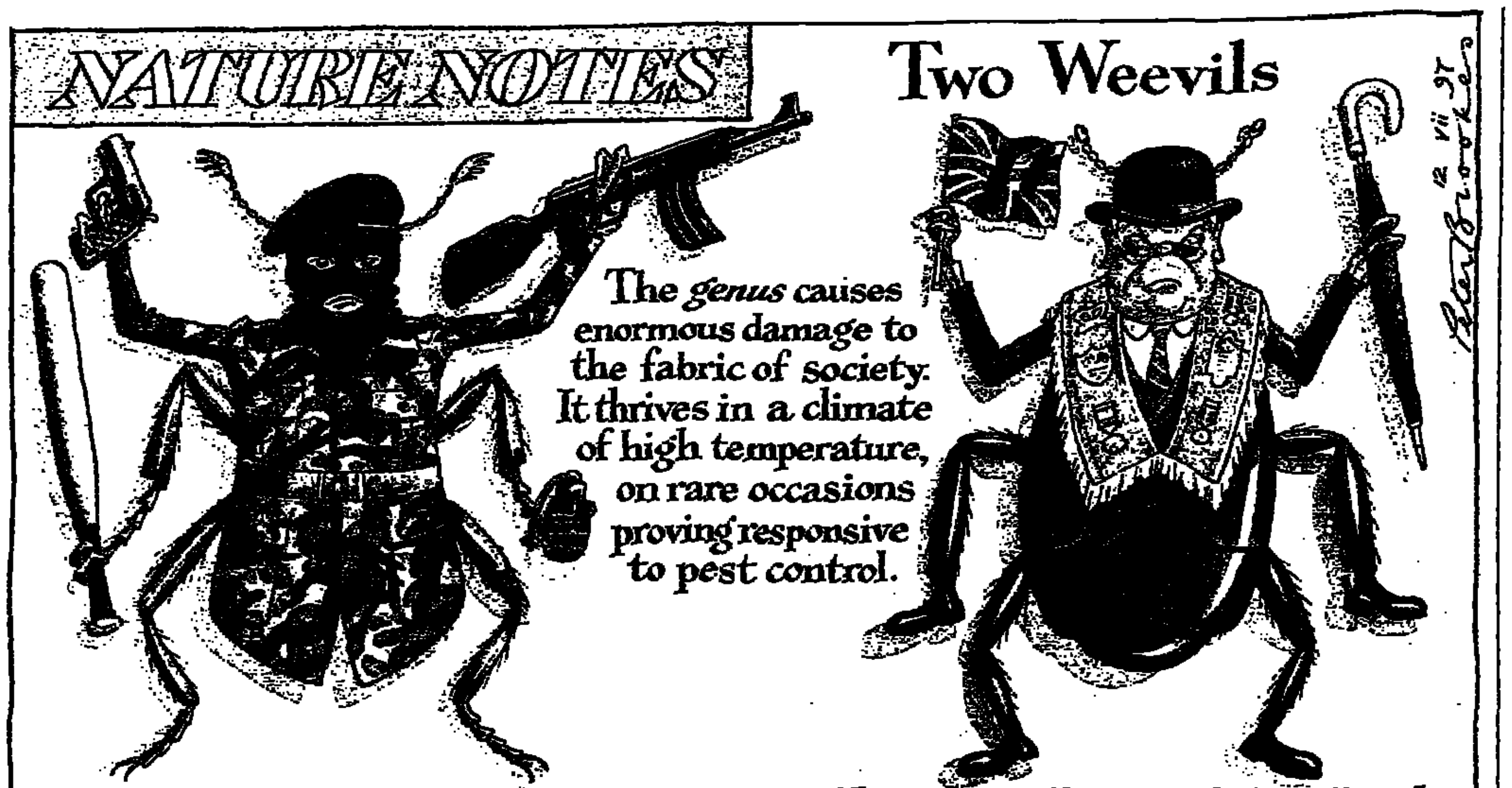

NATURE NOTES
Two Weevils
The genus causes enormous damage to the fabric of society. It thrives in a climate of high temperature, on rare occasions proving responsive to pest control.

Fig.1 Greater Weevil
(Ira nationalista)

Fig. 2 The Lesser of Two Weevils
(Orangeus rerouteus)

OPINION

Ominous delay: Freedom of information is one of the few issues best tackled quickly, before ministers start to enjoy the power that secrecy affords them .... **Page 23**

Mandela effect: The means by which Mr Mandela relinquishes power may prove as important to South African democracy as the manner in which he left jail .... **Page 23**

LETTERS

Westminster Abbey restoration; Serb guilt; virtual pets; Countryside Rally; probation supervision .... **Page 23**

COLUMNS

Simon Jenkins: Jonathan Dimbleby's book on Chris Patten, *The Last Governor*, contains allegations against British ministers and officials that amount to a charge of treason .... **Page 22**

Lord Irvine: The Government has begun this century's most extensive programme of constitutional reform .... **Page 22**

OBITUARIES

Alexander Cordell, novelist; **Hélène Propper de Callejon**, writer and artist; **Miguel Najdorf**, chess grandmaster .... **Page 25**

BUSINESS

Bad connection?: Fears for BT's merger with MCI cut £2.4 billion off its share price .... **Page 27**

Cost cut: Merrydown, the troubled cider and alcopops maker, will wield the boardroom axe in a £1.5 million cost-cutting exercise .... **Page 27**

New bet: RF Hotels is in talks with gaming companies over casino plans .... **Page 27**

Markets: The FTSE 100 rose 31.7 points to close at 4799.5. Sterling rose to 105.0 after rising from $1.6875 to $1.6945 and from DM2.9555 to DM2.9982 .... **Page 30**

SPORT

Motor racing: Damon Hill was twentieth in free practice on a lively day off the British Grand Prix track .... **Page 52**

Tennis: Britain were level 1-1 with Ukraine after the first day of their Davis Cup match in Kiev .... **Page 51**

Football: Sheffield United have issued a writ against their former manager, Howard Kendall .... **Page 52**

CAR 97

On course: Silverstone's Jordan team are planning a home win tomorrow

ARTS

Richard Morrison: "The renaissance happening in Brighton could easily be mirrored across the British seaside, if only we took more pride in the fantastical maritime architecture to be found in practically every resort" .... **Page 21**

Urban angst: Irvine Welsh, begetter of *Trainspotting*, has written *Headstate*, a new show performed in a disused warehouse in London's Docklands. But Benedict Nightingale is not impressed .... **Page 21**

SECTIONS

MAGAZINE

Erykah Badu .... Page 16
Sophie Dahl in lingerie daywear .... Page 40
Cycling and art ... Page 32
French feast .... Page 55

Weekend

Childhood spoils: Who's cashing in? .... Pages 1, 2

In step: On the road with Mayo marchers ... Page 10
Travel: Morocco; Prague; Australia .... Pages 15-21

10 15

Windsurfing: Meet a fabulous Baker boy ...... Page 6
Which pet? Electronic or the real thing? ...... Page 5

directory

Still smiling: House music a decade on .... Page 4
Win tickets for the Phoenix Music Festival .... Page 6
TV & radio: .... Pages 23-51

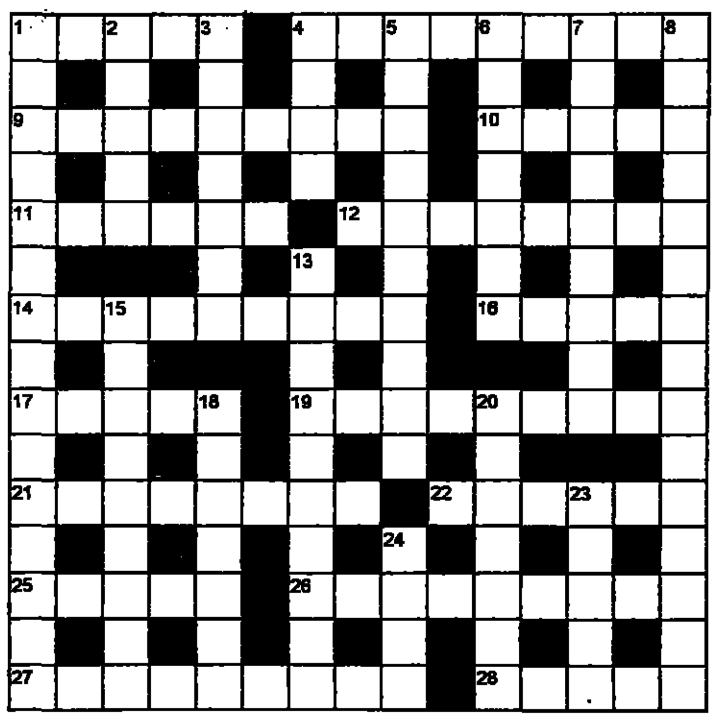
THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,530

A £20 book token will be awarded to the senders of the first five correct solutions opened next Thursday. Entries should be addressed to: The Times, Saturday Crossword Competition, PO Box 486, Virginia Street, London E1 9DD. The names of the winners and the solution will be published next Saturday.

Name/Address ....

....

....



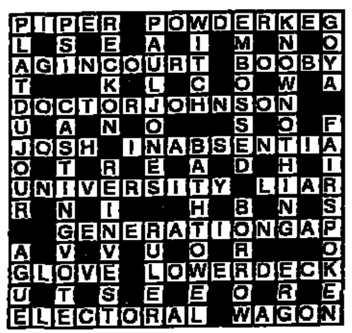
ACROSS

1 *Bill gets free bitter* (5).
4 Supporter concealing piece of malicious chatter (9).
9 Revolutionary led island to overwhelming victory (9).
10 Substitute chocaholics are really outraged by, initially? (5).
11 It's allowable, but shocking, when laid on the line (6).
12 Stable with one acceptable horse (8).
14 A number impair efficiency of probation (9).
16 Belief in sacred objects (5).
17 Seaman returning to deck, sort of (5).
19 Identified tune with help, backing by newspaperman (9).
21 Someone questioned when an explosive device is found in river (8).
22 One leaves home before catching plane (6).
25 I had quickly found island, in a manner of speaking (5).
26 Celandine flourished every so many years (9).
27 Observes way in which advertisement's introduced make-up (9).
28 Both 24 and 27 do make a presentation (5).

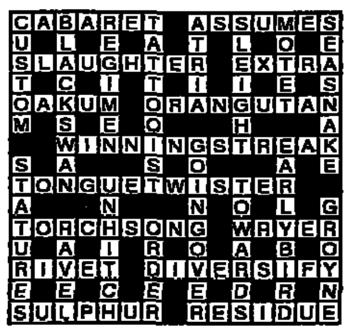
DOWN

1 Where you can see washing at every point (3,5,3,4).
2 Restore Frenchman to wife (5).
3 Annoyance expressed by "Hell" and "Blast" (7).
4 Gathering to cook (4).
5 Jack Sprat wouldn't indulge in gossip (4,3,3).
6 Rustic with a lot of objection to pain (7).
7 Having bother getting up, one's brought before Head for unpunctuality (9).
8 Fairy's dressing of wool led to change (5,10).
13 Without regard to the consequences, like Charles II (4-6).
15 Adaptable relatives adapted (9).
18 Victory (with valuable card I held) over Henry (7).
20 He may hold shares in pit, in one that's fraudulent (7).
23 Beaver skin after completion of dressing (5).
24 Almost lower boat (4).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,524



Solution to Puzzle No 20,529



LAST WEEK'S WINNERS: *H E Bell, Reading, Berkshire; J P Hisley, Formby, Merseyside; J H Gracey, Epping, Essex; B Hague, Winchester, Hampshire; W Soloman, Daventry, Northants.*

The Times Crossword Championship 1997 will be staged at the first Mind Sports Olympiad at the Royal Festival Hall, London, on Sunday August 24.
The qualifying crossword for this year's championship will be published in *The Times* next Thursday, July 17. See page two for further details.

AA INFORMATION

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HOURS OF DARKNESS

TODAY

Sun rises:	Sun sets:
4 58 am	9.14 pm
Moon sets	Moon rises
12.08 am	1.02 pm

First quarter today

London 9 14 pm to 4 59 am
Bristol 9 24 pm to 5 09 am
Edinburgh 9 52 pm to 4 45 am
Manchester 9 33 pm to 4 56 am
Penzance 9.29 pm to 5.27 am

TOMORROW

Sun rises:	Sun sets:
4.59 am	9.13 pm
Moon sets	*Moon rises*
12.29 am	2.06 pm

Full moon July 20

London 9.13 pm to 5 00 am
Bristol 9.23 pm to 5 10 am
Edinburgh 9 51 pm to 4 47 am
Manchester 9 32 pm to 4 58 am
Penzance 9.28 pm to 5.28 am

HIGH TIDES

TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
London Bridge	07.21	6.4	19 30	6 1
Aberdeen	06 52	3 6	19 33	3 4
Avonmouth	00 06	11 0	12.29	10 5
Belfast	04 33	3.2	17 03	2 9
Cardiff	-	-	12 15	9 8
Devonport	11 06	4 7	23.24	4.8
Dover	04 21	5 6	16 45	5 8
Dublin (N Wall)	05 18	3.5	17 48	3 4
Falmouth	10 37	4.5	22.55	4 6
Greenock	05.39	3.2	18.27	2 8
Harwich	05.06	3 4	17 17	3 4
Holyhead	03 39	4 8	16 15	4.5
Hull (Albert D)	11 45	7 5	-	-
Ilfracombe	11 24	7 3	23 42	7 4
King's Lynn	11 45	5 4	-	-
Leith	08 19	4 7	20 48	4 6
Liverpool	04 28	8 0	16 58	7 7
Lowestoft	*03 16*	*2 1*	*15.06*	*2 3*
Margate	05 27	4 1	17 41	4 1
Milford Haven	11.42	5.5	-	-
Newquay	10 40	5 6	23.02	5.7
Oban	11 28	3 0	23 33	3 1
Penzance	10 10	4 5	22 30	4 5
Portland	-	-	12.10	1 3
Portsmouth	04 31	3 9	17 15	4.0
Shoreham	04.24	5 0	16 53	5 1
Southampton	04 04	4 0	16.36	4 0
Swansea	11 49	7 7	-	-
Tees	09.27	4.6	22.04	4 4
Walton-on-N	05 05	3 6	17 16	3.5

All times BST Hights in metros

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Yesterday: Highest day temp: Kinloss, Moray, 26C (79F); lowest day max: Fair Isle, 11C (52F); highest rainfall: South Uist, Outer Hebrides 0.26in, highest sun: Aspatria, Cumbria, 15 hr

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Recycled paper made up 41.2% of the raw material for UK newspapers in the first half of 1996

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FORECAST

☐ **General:** Early mist and low cloud in eastern England should become confined to North Sea coasts, leaving most of *England and Wales with reasonable spells* of sultry warm sunshine. A few scattered thundery showers in afternoon. Drizzly rain likely in southwest England and southwest Wales later. Tonight, rain and showers over southwest England and Wales.

Showers and local thunderstorms over Scotland and Northern Ireland, but some places will stay dry. The east coast of Scotland will have mist and low cloud. Tonight, showers and thunderstorms in parts of Scotland and Northern Ireland.

☐ **London, SE, Cent S England, Midlands, Ch'l Is:** Misty start. Very warm, fairly sunny. An afternoon thunderstorm possible. Light SE wind. Max 27C (81F).

☐ **E Anglia, E, Cent N, NE England, Borders, E'burgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, Moray Firth, NE Scotland:** Dull and misty at first, but warm sunshine this afternoon. Small chance of a late thunderstorm. Light to moderate SE wind. Max 23C (75F).

☐ **SW England, S Wales:** Sunny spells at first; cloud and drizzly rain later. A moderate S wind. Max 23C (73F).

☐ **N Wales, NW England, Lakes, IoM:** Warm, mainly sunny, but chance of late thundery downpour. Light SE wind. Max 20C (68F).

☐ **SW, NW Scotland, Glasgow, Cent Highlands, Argyll, N Ireland:** Warm with sunny spells. A few thunderstorms likely over hills. Light SE wind. Max 24C (75F).

☐ **Orkney, Shetland:** Cool and misty. A moderate SE wind. Max 16C (61F).

☐ **Outlook:** Showers. NE coasts dull and misty.

☐ **Pollen:** moderate on Saturday, low on Sunday in central London; moderate over the weekend in NE, SE England, E Anglia, outer London, eastern Home Counties; high on Sat, moderate on Sun in S Wales, SW England, western Home Counties; moderate on Sat, high on Sun in N Scotland; high over weekend in S Scotland, N Ireland, NW, cent S England, N Wales, Midlands (Supplied by the Pollen Research Unit)

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

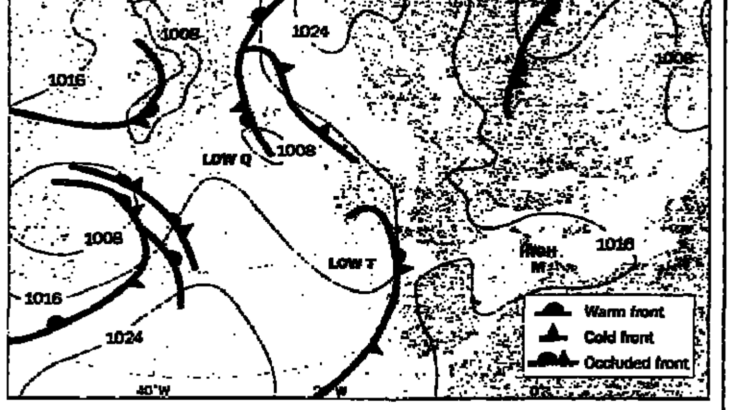
24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=dust storm; du=dull; f=fair; fg=fog; g=gale; h=hail; r=rain; sh=shower; sl=sleet; sn=snow; s=sun; t=thunder

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	Max F	
Aberdeen	4 7	-	16	61	c
Anglesey	10.9	-	20	68	s
Aspatria	15.1	-	21	70	s
Aviemore	15.0	-	23	73	s
Belfast	7 6	0.01	21	70	s
Birmingham	8 0	-	22	72	b
Bognor R	14 7	-	21	70	s
Bournem'th	14.6	-	21	70	s
Bristol	6.5	-	25	77	s
Buxton	9.0	-	21	70	s
Cardiff	14.3	-	22	72	s
Clacton	14.2	-	18	64	s
Cleethorpes	X				
Colwyn Bay	12.2	-	22	72	s
Cromer	8 4	-	16	61	b
Dunbar	8.2	-	17	63	b
Eastbourne	12.1	-	22	72	s
Edinburgh	11 8	-	18	64	s
Eskdalemuir	6 9	-	21	70	b
Exmouth	13 3	-	19	66	s
Falmouth	5 8	-	21	70	s
Fishguard	9 8	-	21	70	b
Folkestone	13 8	-	23	73	s
Glasgow	1 4	0.01	20	68	c
Guernsey	X				
Hastings	13 9	-	21	70	s
Hayling I.	14 1	-	19	66	s
Herne Bay	X				
Hove	12 0	-	21	70	s
Hunstanton	8.3	-	17	63	s
Isle of Man	8.2	-	18	64	s
Isle Of Wight	8.2	-	18	64	s
Jersey	3.7	-	18	64	c
Kinloss	14.8	-	26	79	s
Leeds	6 8	-	23	73	c
Lerwick	5 1	-	13	55	s
Leuchars	2.7	0.01	16	61	c
Littlehmptn	11.7	-	22	72	s
London	7 9	-	23	73	c
Lowestoft	5.5	-	18	64	b
Manchester	13.7	-	23	73	s
Margate	9.3	-	20	68	b
Minehead	13.0	-	20	68	s
Morecambe	14.6	-	23	73	s
Newcastle	9 4	-	20	68	s
Newquay	5.3	-	22	72	c
Norwich	11.2	-	22	72	s
Oxford	7 4	-	21	70	s
Penzance	X	-	21	70	s
Poole	14 8	-	25	77	s
Prestatyn	X				
Ross-o-wye	8 0	-	23	73	s
Salcombe	8.5	-	17	63	s
Saunton Snd	10.1	-	22	72	s
Scarboro'	5.2	-	15	59	s
Shrewsbury	9.2	-	23	73	s
Skegness	4 5	-	15	59	c
Southend	7 9	-	22	72	c
Southport	14.2	-	24	75	s
Southsea	X				
Stornoway	13.1	-	21	70	s
Swanage	14 3	-	21	70	s
Teignmouth	12.7	-	19	66	s
Tenby	8.0	-	19	66	fg
Tiree	X				
Torquay	12.6	-	21	70	s
Tynemouth	.	-	15	59	b
West-s-mare	X				
Weymouth	13 6	-	18	64	s

ABROAD

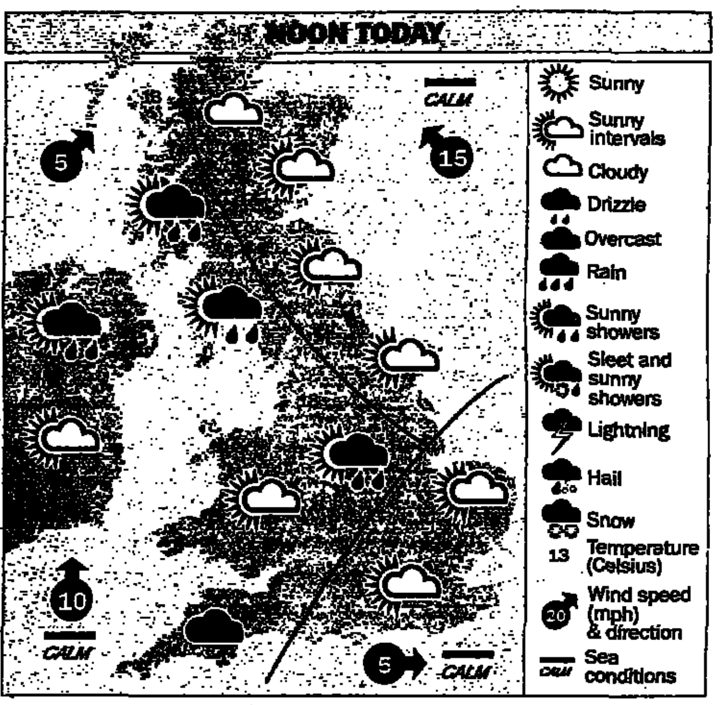
	C	F	
Ajaccio	27	81	s
Akrotiri	27	81	s
Alex'dria	29	84	f
Algiers	26	79	s
Amst'dm	21	70	s
Athens	32	90	s
B Aires	12	54	d
Bahrain	37	99	s
Bangkok	32	90	f
Barbados	29	84	f
Barcelona	26	79	s
Beirut	28	82	f
Belgrade	25	77	f
Berlin	23	73	s
Bermuda	29	84	s
Biarritz	18	64	c
Borde'x	23	73	f
Brussels	21	70	f
Budapst	26	79	s
Cairo	31	88	s
Cape Tn	24	75	s
Ch'church	11	52	X
Chicago	25	77	s
Cologne	24	75	s
Corfu	29	84	s
C'phagn	23	73	s
Dublin	18	64	f
Dubrovnik	24	75	s
Faro	23	73	s
Florence	29	84	s
Frankfurt	23	73	f
Funchal	24	75	s
Geneva	24	75	f
Gibraltar	24	75	s
Helsinki	15	59	c
Hong K	29	84	c
Innsbrck	24	75	f
Istanbul	27	81	s
Jeddah	38	100	s
Jo'burg	14	57	f
L Angels	22	72	s
L Palmas	25	77	f
Le Tquet	21	70	f
Lisbon	24	75	f
Locarno	22	72	f
Luxembg	24	75	f
Luxor	36	97	s
Madrid	24	75	f
Majorca	26	79	f
Malaga	32	90	s
Malta	27	81	f
Melb'rne	9	48	f
Mexico C	22	72	s
Miami	28	82	r
Milan	26	79	s
Montreal	24	75	s
Moscow	21	70	c
Munich	23	73	f
N Delhi	34	93	f
N York	26	79	s
Nairobi	18	64	r
Naples	29	84	s
Nice	23	73	f
Oslo	23	73	f
Paris	25	77	s
Peking	34	93	s
Perth	13	55	s
Prague	22	72	f
Reykjavik	13	55	r
Rhodes	29	84	s
Rio de J	29	84	s
Riyadh	40	104	s
Rome	26	79	s
S Fr'isco	18	64	s
S Paulo	25	77	s
Salzburg	23	73	f
Santiago	12	54	s
Seoul	31	88	f
Sing'por	31	88	f
St'kholm	16	61	c
Strasb'rg	25	77	s
Sydney	12	54	s
Tangier	23	73	s
Tel Aviv	30	86	f
Tenerife	26	79	s
Tokyo	23	73	r
Toronto	X		
Tunis	31	88	s
Valencia	26	79	s
Vanc'ver	15	59	f
Venice	27	81	f
Vienna	25	77	c
Warsaw	18	64	c
Wash'ton	28	82	s
Wel'ngton	13	55	X
Zurich	25	77	s

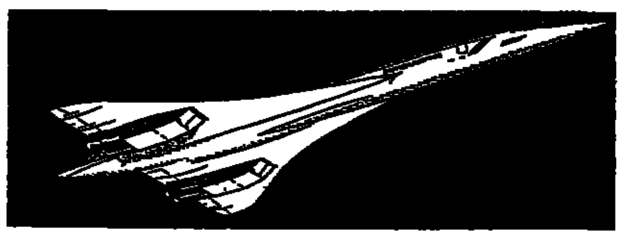
Temperatures at midday local time on Thursday X = not available



Changes to chart above from noon, low Q will move northeastwards and fill. Low T will move northwards and will slowly fill. High M will drift slowly eastwards with little change in pressure

NOON TODAY





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Concorde to Brussels on 17 October ● tour the capital and Bruges ● overnight Oriana cruise to Southampton £699

Orient-Express to Southampton on 1 November ● five night Oriana cruise to Tenerife via Vigo and Madeira ● Concorde supersonic to Heathrow £1,699

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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

SATURDAY JULY 12 1997

BT shares slide as City worries over MCI deal

By Carl Mortished and Eric Reguly

FEARS for the future of British Telecom's merger with MCI cut £2.4 billion from the value of BT shares yesterday.

The stock market took fright after Thursday's profit warning from MCI, the US long-distance operator, which highlighted BT's apparent ignorance of the scale of MCI's problem in penetrating local telephone networks.

Sir Peter Bonfield, BT's chief executive, said that he first became aware of MCI's problems at a board meeting of the US company on Wednesday. On Thursday, MCI announced that losses from its venture into local telephone networks could reach $800 million (£472 million), double the amount expected in the current year, and in excess of that in 1998.

Sir Peter said the news came as a surprise and insisted that it was premature to discuss a renegotation of last year's merger agreement. He said MCI was suffering from delaying tactics by local telephone monopolies in the US obstructing MCI's attempt to get access to local networks. "They should have anticipated it but they didn't," he said.

Sir Peter said BT still believed that a strategic push into local networks was the right thing to do. He said there were several alternatives to endorsing the MCI decision to forge ahead. These include the use of different technology, sharing the risk with a third party and changing the regulatory regime. BT is supporting MCI's call for regulatory action against the anti-competitive obstacles being used by local monopolies.

Telecoms analysts said the share price slump reflected anxieties that BT was being kept in the dark about MCI's activities. Martin Mabbutt, analyst at UBS, said: "The disturbing thing is that BT said nothing. It reflects badly on the management and the hand-in-glove alliance they claimed to have with MCI."

MCI blamed the higher losses on the enormous resistance put up by the regional Bell companies to open up their markets to competition. MCI, whose business was previously restricted to long-distance services, has targeted the local market for its next phase of growth.

Marco Fasoli, a partner at Broadview Associates, an investment bank that specialises in the telecoms market, said: "It is easy to underestimate the cost of breaking open entrenched monopolies."

Mr Fasoli does not think BT will abandon the purchase or attempt to renegotiate the price. "Strategically the deal still makes sense. BT is getting access to the largest telecoms market in the world. Unless they are there, BT will not be able to attract the top international corporate customers."

The 1996 Telecommunications Act in the US eliminated internal barriers, allowing local and long-distance operators to compete in each other's markets. But local monopolies have largely remained intact and long-distance companies such as AT&T, Sprint and MCI have found it almost impossible to develop a local service.

MCI's top management, led by Bert Roberts, chairman, and Gerry Taylor, chief executive, will resist any effort by BT to reduce the purchase price, partly because they stand to benefit so much if the deal goes through as agreed.

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Concert players: Gerry Taylor, left, MCI chief executive, with Sir Peter Bonfield of BT

Sir Rocco takes a gamble on casino talks

By Dominic Walsh

RF HOTELS, Sir Rocco Forte's fledgling hotel and restaurant company, is in talks with gaming companies over the possibility of opening casinos alongside his new hotel projects.

The £15 million hotel and leisure complex that he is developing in Cardiff has planning permission for a casino; in Edinburgh, Sir Rocco is considering applying for a licence to turn a disused basement at the Balmoral Hotel into an upmarket gaming club.

Sir Rocco is already believed to have had informal discussions with Alan Goodenough, chief executive of London Clubs International. He is also likely to have targeted Capital Corporation, which London Clubs tried to buy earlier this year; its chief executive is Alan Hearn, a director of Forte before its takeover by Granada.

Sir Rocco said: "There are two casino licences in Cardiff, but traditionally there have been three. The space could still be used for other leisure purposes, but we have talked to a number of casino operators about developing a wider relationship."

The 120-bedroom Cardiff hotel is part of the £2.4 billion regeneration of the city's bay area. The five-star project is expected to be finished in June, in time for the 1998 European Summit being held in Cardiff.

The Forte family is providing more than £11 million of the cost, with £3.5 million from Cardiff Bay Develpment Corporation and £300,000 from the Wales Tourist Board.

If the company decides to sign up a casino partner, the relationship could extend to future projects on the Continent. Sir Rocco is targeting Florence, Rome and Venice.

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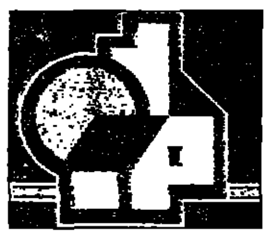

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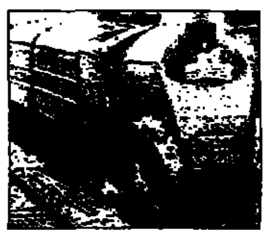


PROPERTY SPECIAL

38-39
A guide to renting out your home successfully

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK INDICES

FTSE 100	4799.5	(+31.7)
Yield	3.40%	
FTSE All share	2250.41	(+13.23)
Nikkei	19875.49	(+120.71)
New York:		
Dow Jones	7933.81	(+47.05)*
S&P Composite	916.89	(+3.11)*

US RATE

Federal Funds	5⅝%*	(5⅞%)
Long Bond	101⅛*	(100[illegible])
Yield	6.54%*	(6.56%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth Interbank	6[illegible]%	(6[illegible]%)
Liffe long gilt future (Sep)	114[illegible]	(114[illegible])

STERLING

New York:		
$	1.6943*	(1.6885)
London:		
$	1.6946	(1.6877)
DM	2.9987	(2.9555)
FFr	10.1250	(9.9904)
SFr	2.4738	(2.4475)
Yen	192.69	(190.86)
£ Index	105.0	(103.8)

DOLLAR

London:		
DM	1.7703*	(1.7516)
FFr	5.9585*	(5.9200)
SFr	1.4596*	(1.4490)
Yen	113.80*	(113.14)
$ Index	102.5	(102.2)

Tokyo close Yen 113.90

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Sep)	$18.10	($18.05)

GOLD

London close	$320.15	($319.45)

* denotes midday trading price

Jobs boost

Thousands of jobs in the British defence industry have been secured with Germany's backing of the four-nation Eurofighter programme. The fighter aircraft project will guarantee about 16,000 direct jobs at peak production and support an estimated 80,000 related jobs. **Page 28**

Sterling exceeds DM3 for first time since 1991

By George Sivell

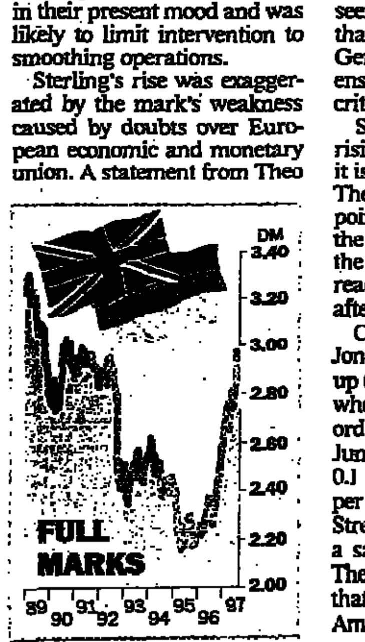
STERLING traded above DM3 yesterday for the first time since April 1991 as currency dealers bet on a further rise in interest rates.

By the official Bank of England close, the pound had edged back to DM2.9982, but was still up 4.27 pfennigs on the day. The Bank's trade-weighted index climbed from 103.8 to 105.0, its highest close since autumn 1990.

The huge one-day gain follows Thursday's rise in interest rates and was attributed by traders to hopes of more rises in coming months. Some economists believe the Bank of England might get away with a couple more quarter-point rises by the year end; others believe that interest rates could yet hit 8 per cent in the middle of next year, compared with the present 6.75 per cent.

Traders said the pound would have traded even higher yesterday but for fears of intervention by the Bank of England. Its hand was not detected in yesterday's dealings, although analysts pointed out that the Bank was unlikely to take the markets on in their present mood and was likely to limit intervention to smoothing operations.

Sterling's rise was exaggerated by the mark's weakness caused by doubts over European economic and monetary union. A statement from Theo Waigel, the German Finance Minister, that put pressure on regional German governments to cut spending was seen as a sign of the fudges that both France and Germany would employ to ensure that the Maastricht criteria were in some way met.



Shares shrugged off the rising pound and the damage it is likely to inflict on exports. The FTSE 100 index rose 31.7 points to close at 4799.5 taking the market within 32 points of the all-time high of 4831.7 reached on July 3, the day after the Budget.

On Wall Street the Dow Jones industrial average was up 66.72 points to 7,953.48 after wholesale prices fell for a record sixth consecutive month in June. Producer prices dropped 0.1 per cent in June after a 0.3 per cent fall in May. Wall Street economists had expected a same-again figure for June. The fall persuaded analysts that the next interest rate rise in America is some way off.

Hambros trio not allowed to see report

By Jason Nisse

THE three corporate finance directors of Hambros who left on Thursday over the Cooperative Wholesale Society scandal have not been allowed to see the Norton Rose report into the affair commissioned by Hambros.

Nigel Pantling, head of corporate finance, and two directors, Peter Large and Andrew Salmon, left the bank after the report found that Hambros had used confidential CWS documents while attempting to put together a £1.2 billion offer for the group by Andrew Regan's Galileo Group.

The Securities and Futures Authority is now studying the report to see whether it will take disciplinary action against the three former directors.

Ronnie Fox, of Fox Williams, the legal firm that advised Ron Baker, the former Barings director, on his successful appeal against an SFA rebuke, said that if the SFA took any disciplinary action against the three, the report would have to be given to them.

Merrydown board in firing line

By Dominic Walsh

MERRYDOWN, the troubled cider and alcopops maker, is to wield the boardroom axe as part of a £1.5 million cost-cutting exercise. Unveiling a slump in pre-tax profits from £2.03 million to £821,000 in the year to March 31, Richard Purdey, chairman, would not guarantee the jobs of any of the company's seven directors, including his own.

Analysts, still reeling from a surprise profits warning in May, suggested last night that Mr Purdey, who is 55, might take early retirement after he announces the result of the review in mid-August.

Responsibility for the fall-off in performance lies squarely with Two Dogs, which until recently had helped to offset a decline in cider sales. The 6 per cent dip in group turnover to £34.9 million masks a halving of sales of Two Dogs, though Mr Purdey is hopeful that the decision to hand distribution of the brand to Scottish & Newcastle will turn things round.

Two Dogs' original alcoholic lemonade helped to spark the popularity of alcopops, but it was quickly undermined by the arrival of more than 90 competing brands. "I don't think we could ever have believed in our wildest dreams how many new products would flow into the market," said Mr Purdey.

As a result of the S&N agreement, Merrydown has cut back its distribution function. Ten jobs have been cut from the 160-strong workforce, and the boardroom is to be "streamlined". This is expected to result in exceptional costs of between £400,000 and £600,000.

The good news for the company was that cider sales saw volume growth of 13 per cent, with the premium-packaged Merrydown Vintage and Pulse White Cider leading the way.

Earnings per share fell from 10.83p to 3.92p. The final dividend of 1p, payable in October, makes 3.1p for the year.

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Woolwich windfall outcome

THE 600,000 Woolwich savers and borrowers who opted to sell their shares immediately will gain an average windfall of £1,900.

Shares in the last of four auctions used to sell off the unwanted stock made an average price of 292p yesterday. The average from all the auctions was 296p. Woolwich shares fell 4½p to 299½p yesterday.

Bus takeover

LONDON United Busways, the capital's last independent red bus company, is to be sold for £41.4 million to Transdev, the French state-owned transport group. United runs 580 buses on 40 routes in southwest London.

Energy sale

THE Energy Group yesterday sold part of its recently acquired power trading business in the US. The sale to Lehman Brothers will deliver $20-$25 million (£11.8-£14.8 million) to The Energy Group. The sale is subject to the takeover of The Energy Group by Pacificorp.

Eurofighter decision secures jobs

By Christine Buckley, Industrial Correspondent

THOUSANDS of jobs in the defence industry were yesterday secured with Germany's backing of the four-nation Eurofighter programme.

The fighter aircraft project, in which the UK has a 38 per cent stake through British Aerospace, will guarantee about 16,000 direct jobs at peak production and support an estimated 80,000 related jobs. Production may start in early 1999 and could run for about 20 years if export interest in the aircraft is strong enough.

BAe said: "We are delighted that we have got through this stage. We have always been convinced about the Eurofighter project."

BAe will handle final assembly of the aircraft at its plant in Warton, Lancashire, which will also deal with component manufacture along with the company's centres in Sanlesbury, Lancashire, and Brough, East Yorkshire. Jobs will also be secured at Rolls-Royce's military engine production centre in Bristol. Rolls has a 33 per cent stake in a consortium to build engines for the Eurofighter.

Germany's final endorsement of the £40 billion development of the Eurofighter, which involves Italy (with a 20 per cent stake) and Spain (12 per cent), means that the Royal Air Force will get new aircraft by 2001. Britain has ordered 230 Eurofighters.

Germany's budget problems have cast a shadow over the Eurofighter programme which was launched in 1983. Britain has placed increasing pressure on Bonn to ensure collaboration from the project's second-biggest partner.

Germany, through Dasa, has a 30 per cent stake. Its commitment yesterday guarantees the next stage of development, which will lead to the signing of investment contracts when the partners start to tool up to make the aircraft.

DYLAN VAUGHAN

Farmer shareholders at the Avonmore food company meeting that backed a merger with Waterford that may hit British jobs

Irish dairy merger wins vote

From Eileen McCabe
in dublin

IRISH farmer shareholders in the co-operative societies that hold the controlling interest in the Avonmore and Waterford food companies yesterday voted overwhelmingly for their merger to create the biggest dairy company in Ireland.

The new company, Avonmore Waterford, will have annual turnover of Ir£2.5 billion (£2.2 billion). Its billion-gallon milk pool will make it the world's fourth-largest dairy company.

The merger will result in some job losses in Ireland, but it is expected that the main impact will be in Britain, where there is considerable overlap in the companies' operations.

Although yesterday's vote must be ratified at a further meeting later this month, it is highly unlikely that the decision will be overturned.

Members of the Avonmore co-op were the most enthusiastic for the plan, with almost 96 per cent of those at yesterday's meeting voting for it. In neighbouring Waterford, it drew 83 per cent of votes. It needed the support of 75 per cent of those at the meetings.

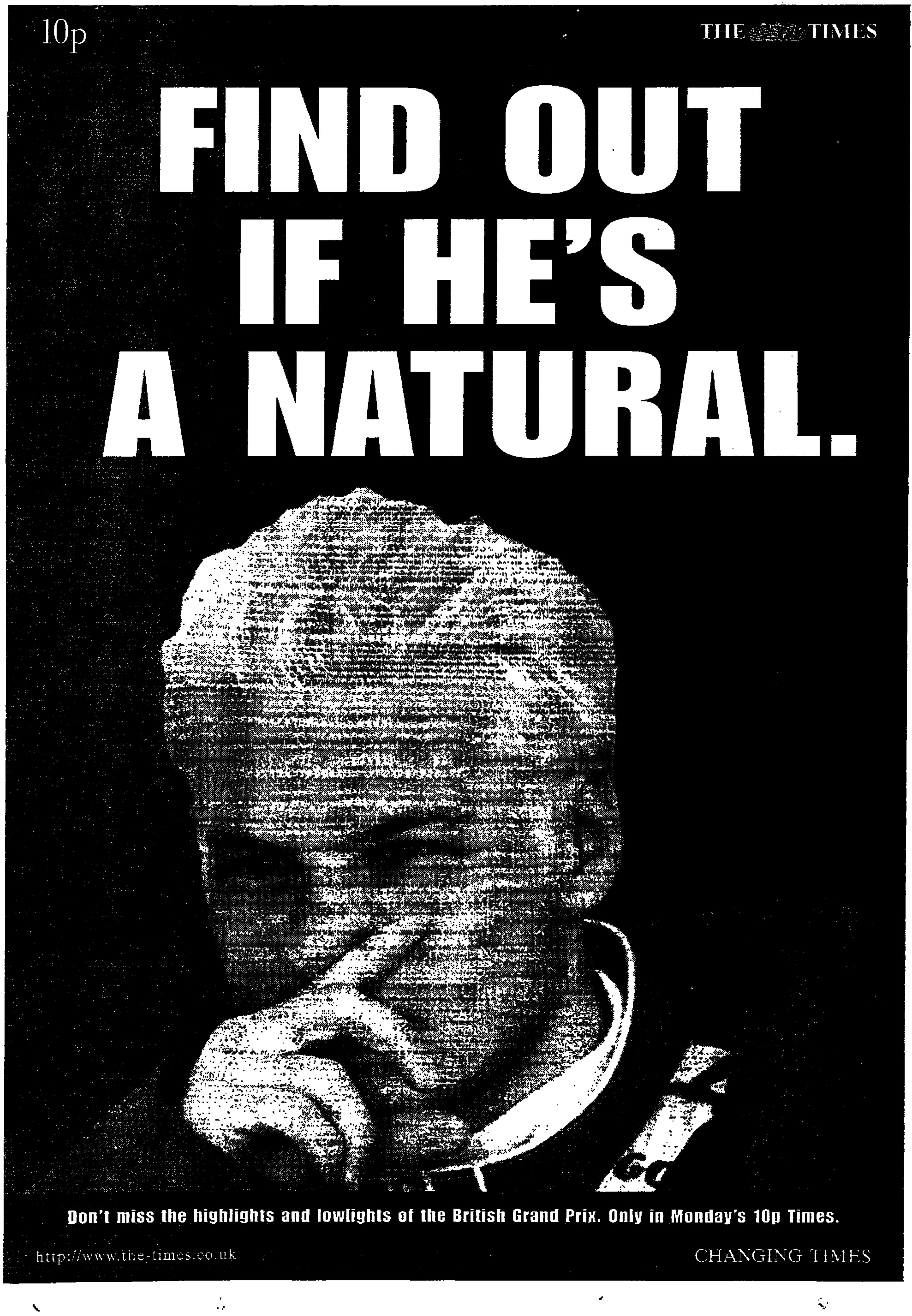
Christie's sales reach six-year high

By Jon Ashworth

CHRISTIE'S INTERNATIONAL, the fine art auctioneer, clinched sales of £557 million in the first half of the year — the highest level for nearly six years.

It sold 75 works of art for $1 million or more. Sales were up 15 per cent in sterling terms and 23 per cent in dollars, pointing to the continuing recovery of the international art market. The main Christie's salesrooms are in London, New York, Geneva and Hong Kong, and the strength of the pound is less of a concern.

The figures were swelled by the success of the John and Frances L Loeb collection, which totalled £57.3 million, the highest for a single-owner sale of Impressionist art at Christie's. Lord Hindlip, the chairman of Christie's, said underlying sales rose 7 per cent, even without the Loeb sale. He said: "The strong sales growth of the first six months of 1997 reflects both the exceptional success of the Loeb collection of Impressionist pictures and the continuing widely based strength of the international art market."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CHANGING TIMES

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

ICI's £475m profit on Australia stake

ICI will make a profit of £475 million on the sale of its 62.4 per cent stake in ICI Australia. The price of the offering of 143 million shares is A$12.35 (£5.46) a share, a discount of 2.76 per cent to the closing price of A$12.70. The global bookbuilding was "significantly oversubscribed".

Underwriters' options on 12 million shares to cover over-allotment, together with the 30 million-share sale to ICI Australia, should result in the divestment of the whole of ICI's stake. ICI will use funds from the disposal to help to finance its £4.9 billion purchase of Unilever's speciality chemicals businesses. The City response yesterday was lukewarm, with ICI's shares closing up 2p at 810½p.

Burton director resigns

THE Burton Group has confirmed that Stuart Rose, chief executive of Dorothy Perkins, Principles, Evans and Burton Menswear, has resigned as a director. Mr Rose, who was on a two-year contract and a 1997 salary of £280,000, is in line for a payoff of at least £560,000. The company would not say if he will work out a notice period. It said negotiations about his settlement were in progress. In 1996 he was paid £514,000; his basic salary was £248,000. Mr Rose's job disappears with the reorganisation announced this week.

Lawrence 20% ahead

LAWRENCE, the animal healthcare and pet accessories group which floated on the Alternative Investment Market two years ago, enjoyed a 20.1 per cent rise in pre-tax profits in the year to March 31, from £1.8 million to £2.2 million. Turnover was up 10.8 per cent from £13.5 million to £15 million, and earnings per share jumped 16.7 per cent from 20.36p to 23.7p. A final dividend of 6.12p (5.56p) will be paid on November 6, bringing the total dividend to 7.77p (7.06p). The group says it will continue to look for acqusitions.

Sovereign liquidation

WILLIS CORROON, the insurance broker, has been forced to put its Sovereign subsidiary into liquidation after losing an arbitration battle with a reinsurer. Sovereign has effectively been closed to new business since 1992, but Willis Corroon has been forced to put up around £80 million to meet liabilities. However, losing the dispute with the reinsurer would mean that Willis Corroon could be faced with unlimited liability through Sovereign. Willis Corroon refused to give details of the arbitration.

Eagles' Sharks stake

EAGLES, owner of the Sheffield Eagles rugby league team, is paying Mushroom Records, the Australian music group, £40,000 for a 40 per cent stake in the Sheffield Sharks, the Premier league basketball team. Mushroom is retaining a 10 per cent stake in the team, while Chrysalis Group will retain its 50 per cent holding. Chrysalis and the Eagles are also pumping a total of £300,000 into the Sheffield Sharks in the form of convertible loan notes.

Prism Leisure advances

PRISM LEISURE, the cut-price computer games, music and video wholesaler, lifted profits to £2.7 million, up 28 per cent from £2.1 million, in the year to March 28. Turnover was £29.1 million, up 30 per cent from £22.3 million, and earnings per share were 20.93p, up 22 per cent from 17.12p. A final dividend of 5.46p (4.37p) will be paid on September 2, bringing the total dividend to 7.19p (5.75p). The company has sold two divisions, Paul Lamond Games and Kidz Biz, back to their management for £100,000 plus some assets.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.38	2.20
Austria Sch	22.04	20.38
Belgium Fr	64.95	59.99
Canada $	2.448	2.258
Cyprus Cyp£	0.920	0.849
Denmark Kr	11.98	11.09
Finland Mkk	9.41	8.66
France Fr	10.57	9.79
Germany Dm	3.15	2.91
Greece Dr	496	457
Hong Kong $	13.90	12.70
Iceland	127	107
Ireland Pt	1.17	1.08
Israel Shk	6.32	5.67
Italy Lira	3083	2846
Japan Yen	207.83	190.30
Malta	0.688	0.629
Netherlds Gld	3.559	3.264
New Zealand $	2.69	2.45
Norway Kr	13.13	12.19
Portugal Esc	314.03	292.00
S Africa Rd	8.43	7.47
Spain Pta	263.79	245.00
Sweden Kr	13.96	12.86
Switzerland Fr	2.62	2.40
Turkey Lira	266225	248347
USA $	1.799	1.656

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

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A WORKING WEEK FOR: ALAN McGEE

Road to success began with dawn of Creation

Chris Ayres meets the driving force behind the record label that has been instrumental in propelling Oasis to superstardom

ALAN McGEE could give lessons on how not to run a business. Rule number one, do not become addicted to alcohol and cocaine to combat the stress of being £1.5 million in debt. Rule number two, do not turn down a deal on an emotional whim if it is guaranteed to make you a fortune. And rule number three, try to hire an accountant within the first ten years.

But McGee is no Mark McCormack, who trumpeted his success in a book called *What they don't teach you at Harvard Business School*. McGee failed to observe any of the above rules, and still managed to become a multimillionaire and one of the most influential figures in the music industry.

McGee is the man who signed Oasis to his record company, Creation, after hearing them play four songs in a cramped club in Glasgow. Oasis have gone on to become the biggest band since the Beatles, with their latest single, *D'You Know What I Mean*, looking likely to be at number one in the charts tomorrow, having already outsold any other single released this year. A new Oasis album is due next month, and another Creation band, Primal Scream, is at number four in the album charts. In this decade Creation has put 59 singles and about 30 albums into the Top 40.

McGee exudes the enthusiasm of a mischievous schoolboy who has just been given several million pounds in pocket money. "You see this," he says in his affable Glaswegian way, waving towards a plush building just off Regent's Park Road, central London. "I bought this for £730,000 last year and now it's worth well over a million."

Tall, with thinning ginger hair, an electric blue shirt, shiny black shoes and owlish, brown-tinted glasses, he looks like a rock'n'roll version of William Hague, or Irvine Welsh, the cult novelist who also overcame years of drug abuse to make a fortune out of British popular culture.

McGee is keen to show off his new property, which houses his independent photography company, Reaction, set up six months ago, and a luxury flat that is home to Edward Ball, one of Creation's artists. The property is in complete contrast to Creation's dilapidated office over the road, crammed with third-hand furniture and promotional junk.

"The idea of the photography business is to build up a roster of top international rock photographers," says McGee. "We've already got control of most of the talent in Britain. I think I've got bigger ambitions than just Creation Records now. I mean it's just a job to me. After coming through the drugs thing, I realised I was emotionally stunted until the age of 33. I've grown up now and music is not my whole life."

McGee's daily routine underlines his reformed character. "I usually get up at around nine in the morning and make some personal calls to my family and my pals," he says. "Then I'll go to the gym and run for about 40 minutes, come back home, make some business calls, and make it into Creation at about midday. At night I'll either be in the studio, going to see one of my bands or having a meeting over a meal. But I also have a lot of spare time. I go to the movies, stay in, go for meals with my girlfriend, and I watch football. I'm a big Chelsea fan."

The changed lifestyle disguises a troubled past. McGee, just 35 and the son of a former shipyard worker, left school at 16 with one O level. He drifted for eight years. "I had every job you could possibly think of, including a job at McDonald's," he recalls. "I'll tell you one thing though, doing loads of jobs is good for you, because when you do get something you enjoy and you get paid for it, you realise that you're lucky."

McGee loved punk music and played in a number of no-hope bands in the early 1980s before deciding his ability to manage bands was greater than his ability as a musician. He set up Creation Records aged 24 when he was living on £40 a week from the enterprise allowance scheme. He borrowed £1,000 from NatWest as start-up capital. "At first the label didn't make any money," McGee says. "But I also used to manage bands like the Jesus and Mary Chain and all the money I made from that I put back into the label. That's how we used to survive. It was a total act of self-belief. I knew that this musical vision I had with all these bands would actually come good."

> ‘It was total self-belief. I knew my music vision would come good’

Despite an uncanny ability to spot talent, Creation teetered on the edge of financial collapse throughout the 1980s and early 1990s. The situation worsened when McGee turned to drugs. "I had always dabbled slightly, but I started to get heavily into Ecstasy, cocaine, amphetamines and medications like cough mixture," he says. "It was just basically because I was under so much stress and people were trying to make me bankrupt all the time. I would just go home and get drunk or get wrecked. But I never really noticed the drugs when I was running the business and I never really noticed that I had a constant hangover."

Somehow, McGee kept the business afloat, staying up all night worrying about the company's bank balance and making drug-fuelled deals. "I was really motoring, you know what I mean?" he says. "I was working on total instinct and I would always pull off the deals. I could always find the next big band. There was no real financial brains behind it all, that was never one of our fortés. It was just Alan and his mad mates."

Despite Creation's financial problems, McGee refused to sign bands he didn't like, even if he thought they might make money. His instinct was always creative, not commercial. His attitude has not changed since and he recently refused to sign Ocean Colour Scene, even though he knew the band was going to be a massive earner. McGee is proud of his motto: "If you don't love it, you should never do it."

By 1992, having signed a number of commercial flops, Creation was folding under £1.5 million of debt, and McGee was forced to sell 49 per cent of the company to Sony for £3.5 million. He went from having £2,000 in the bank to £2 million. McGee kept 34.5 per cent of the company, with 14 per cent going to Dick Green, Creation's co-founder, and the rest going to McGee's father.

But just as Creation's future began to look secure, McGee suffered a drug-induced nervous breakdown in 1994 that put him in an addiction clinic for nine months. It was a crucial time for Creation, with Oasis just beginning to make their name. But McGee was happy to monitor the band's progress from his room, while the band's management took control.

When McGee emerged teetotal and drugs-free, he was forced almost immediately into a war with his Japanese partners. "When Oasis started to make money Sony, tried to take my shares off me. At that point I said I was going to go because I wasn't going to work for the corporation," says McGee. "The fight got very dirty and I eventually got my own way. They didn't need any more bad publicity after their fight with George Michael. They didn't need the guy who had signed one of their biggest money-earners to walk out, slagging them off."

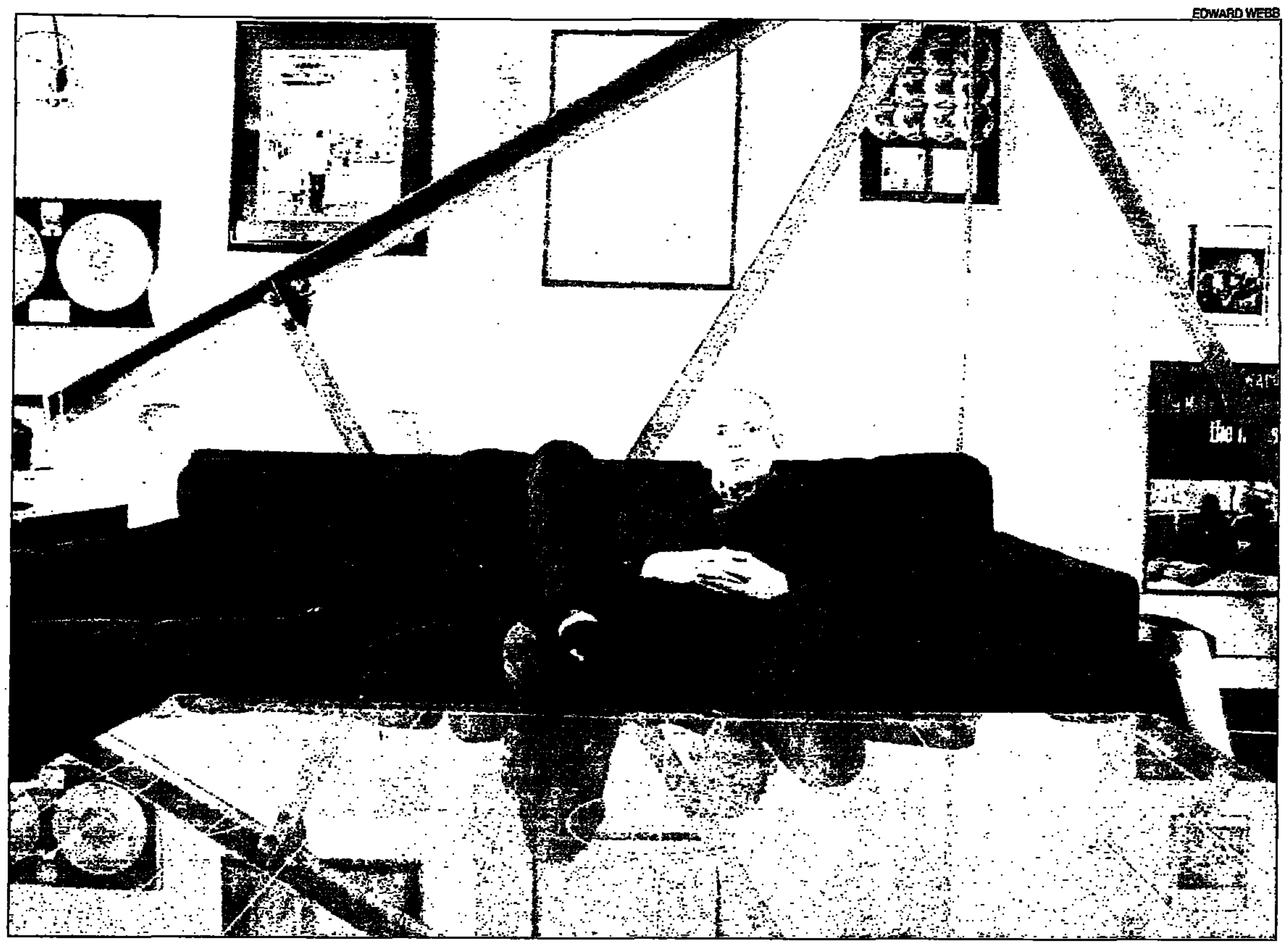
But McGee put aside his differences with Sony and renewed Creation's contract with them, on his own terms. "I don't have a problem wth Sony now," he says. "We delivered them a superstar act and they sold that act around the world. They have no creative input, but they have a great distribution network."

Now Creation has turnover of £40 million, with profits of £7 million. The company even has a chief accountant, who was hired in 1995 after its restructuring. Creation is reformed, controlled and making an enormous amount of money. McGee says the company is democratic, although he has the final say over who is signed or dropped.

"I'm more of a conceptualist than someone who phones people up arguing about a clause in a contract. I think I managed to elevate myself out of the day-to-day running of the business after about 1994. That is up to Dick Green, although it's getting so big now that I think he needs a general manager assistant." These days McGee is looking for other things. He has been approached by a number of Premiership footballers who have asked him to manage them and he is thinking seriously about it. He is also toying with buying a radio station and is in talks with XFM, which goes on air soon, having won a London FM licence.

At the same time McGee is still ambitious for Creation, and spends much time looking for new talent. "I'm not going to find another Oasis, they come along once every 30 years, but who's to say that I'm not going to find the next Elton John?" he says. "Maybe there is a little guy with a bald head and glasses who is going to pop up and sell 20 million records for me."

EDWARD WEBB



Alan McGee, founder of Creation: "I had every job you could think of, but when you do get something you enjoy and get paid for it, you realise you're lucky."

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Tiny grudge

RELATIONS between Tiny Rowland and Dieter Bock, the German who ousted him from his pride and joy Lonrho, are, how shall we put it, not getting any better. Tiny's latest wheeze is to have Bock jailed. For contempt of court, no less. Lawyers were battling it out at the High Court yesterday, and a final hearing is on September 15.

It all goes back to the purchase by Tiny, as part of his indefatigable campaign against Bock, of the right to sue him for an unpaid debt. Last summer he bought an action brought by Christian Norgren, the Swedish tycoon who first introduced the two. Norgren was suing Bock for £250,000 over some share transactions. Tiny continued the action until Norgren, the main witness, was extradited earlier this year to the US. The allegation from the Rowland camp was that this was in some way engineered by Bock to disrupt the court action over the debt. Hence, the claim of contempt. Bock, naturally, denies this but is away on business and uncontactable. I suppose it's too late for you two to bury the hatchet and become firm friends again? Yes, I thought it was.

Rowland: pursuing Bock through the courts

● *I FEAR for the health of our generously proportioned Lord Mayor of London. On Monday, in one of those daft City functions, Sir Roger Cork will receive a delegation from the Company of Water Conservators at Mansion House. This marks the 800th anniversary of the award by Richard I, on one of his rare visits to this country, of the conservancy of the River Thames to the Corporation of London. They will present him with a jug of water. Ed Gallagher, chief executive of the Environment Agency, will solemnly confirm the water is from the river. Sir Robert Clarke, chairman of Thames Water, will state that it's fit to drink. And then? "It's only a ceremony," my Guildhall source tells me pityingly. "It's tradition." Then surely someone should drink it?*

Care-worn

I HATE to be rude about a charitable event. All right, I enjoy being rude about charitable events. But the Broadgate Arena is to be avoided the week after next. Care, the estimable overseas aid charity, is holding a three-day "inflatable Gladiator competition" — apparently it is based on a popular TV programme — and is inviting City teams to take part. Prizes include a night out with Neil Morrisey and Martin Clunes, the actors in *Men Behaving Badly*, and, even worse, a party at Bill Wyman's Sticky Fingers restaurant. This starts a three-month countdown to World Trading Day on October 30, when the actors will visit the floor of Liffe, and all those coloured jackets will donate a portion of their trading to the charity. More anon.

Old bones

MERRILL Lynch's planned new headquarters north of St Paul's is now owned by the Post Office. A couple of thousand years ago King Edward Street was already inhabited, and this could cause delays for the US bank. The area is one of only two Bronze Age settlements in London, and much prized by archaeologists. And in such situations they do tend to get in the way, insisting on removing dusty old bits of bone and so on before the JCBs can go in. "It's not a problem," says the man at Merrills. "We're not going to trample on anything." But did you know about the archaeological finds beforehand? "It's the site of some pretty important old stuff," my American friend says vaguely.

Capel exit

JOHN HENDERSON, chief executive of Capel-Cure Myers, has left the private client broker suddenly after 30 years. No one was saying much, but it is claimed this has nothing to do with the recent failed takeover attempt by ABN Amro. Capel-Cure is now looking for another owner. The Canadian Insurance Group, a consortium of banks that took over Capel-Cure Myers when its original owner, the Central Capital Corporation of Canada, went bankrupt in 1992, must also be hoping for a speedy deal.

● *THE deeply unloveable Abbey National has given further proof of its world-beating ability to hammer its customers. Thursday's rise in mortgage rates was so swift it left other lenders standing and almost pre-empted the Bank of England's decision. But it seems the Abbey's hair-triggered accountants may have slipped up. They claimed that the typical £50,000 repayment mortgage would cost an extra £7.42 per month. Calculations by the accountants at Chantrey Vellacott show that the monthly increase will in fact be £9.50, a whole £2.08 extra. Deeply reassuring to customers who have entrusted their mortgages to the Abbey.*

White move

IAN WHITE, pharmaceuticals analyst at Robert Fleming and a big fan of British Biotech, the stock market star back in the news this week, is leaving for a specialist investment fund. White called British Bio right back in 1994. He is joining TT Investments, run by Tim Tacchi, at Fidelity before he struck out on his own in 1988. "Fund management is less bureaucratic than stockbroking," he says. "It used to be the other way around — no reflection on Flemings, though. These days most stockbrokers are owned by banks."

MARTIN WALLER

"Youngsters today, they've got no brand loyalty"

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STOCK MARKET

CLARE STEWART

City puts BT on the line over its purchase of MCI

BT had its mind on trading rather than talking yesterday as it saw its shares head firmly in the opposite direction to the rest of the stock market.

In the wake of **MCI's** surprise profit warning, **BT** shares tumbled as analysts reduced profit forecasts and questioned the price that it is paying for MCI.

As 192 million BT shares changed hands, the price touched a low of 426p. By the close, the telecoms giant was nursing a 37p fall to 440½p, a drop of about 8 per cent on the day.

In New York, MCI came under pressure as its share price fell 16 per cent within minutes of Nasdaq opening.

London's bullish stock market, however, resisted the impact of BT's fall and powered ahead to within a whisker of the key 4,800 level, helped by activity in the gilts and futures markets and by a shortage of stock.

With the rise in interest rates behind them dealers were busy in the market, favouring domestic stocks over businesses with a higher exposure to soaring sterling.

A firm opening on Wall Street also helped the FTSE 100, which climbed 31.7 points to 4,799.5. However, volumes, after stripping out BT's contribution were relatively modest at about 600 million.

Among the names on the FTSE 100 leader board was **GEC**, which rose 17½p to 377p. The defence group was fired up by being given the green light by the Government to bid for the part of Plessey's military electronics business which it does not already own. The lifting of the earlier restrictions prompted speculation about other acquisition opportunities, while sentiment was also helped by further consideration of GEC's tie up with Italy's Finmeccanica.

Reuters recovered some of the ground lost earlier in the week, helped by demand from US buyers, and ended at 589½p, up 19½p on the day. Meanwhile, **Granada Group** was seen as an attractive buy opportunity, pushing the shares up 48p to 786p.

The cup was also running over for brewers. The combined attraction of businesses with a lesser exposure to the strong pound, together with expectation of higher spending by cash-happy consumers, cheered the sector.

Peter Lawrence, head of Lawrence, saw shares leap ahead

Among the best performers was **Whitbread**, the hotel and brewing group, which leapt 39p to 832p, while **Scottish & Newcastle** added 32½p to 739p. **Greenalls Group** rose 17½p to 470p, with **Bass** up 19½p to 828½p. Cider group **Merrydown** was in less bubbly form after announcing a sharp fall in profits, as sales of its Two Dogs brand fell. The shares ended at 70p, down ½p.

After the fourth and final auction to City institutions, it emerged that sellers of **Woolwich** shares will receive 296½p per share. Yesterday the shares eased to close at 299½p, down from the opening price of 304p. Among other banks, further takeover speculation lifted **NatWest Bank** 19p to 868½p.

Eurotunnel resumed trading after shareholders approved the group's restructuring plans with its bankers. The group's shares moved ahead 2½p to 32½p.

Among water and electricity stocks, **United Utilties** was lifted 16½p to 721p by positive comments about the sector from brokers. **Anglian Water**, which has had its acquisition of **Hartlepool Water** cleared by the DTI, moved up to close at 751½p, up 18p. **Scottish Power** rose 16½p to 432½p, while **Scottish Hydro** ended off a penny at 447½p.

British Land's sale of a £140 million property portfolio helped the group's shares add 21½p to achieve a record high of 629p.

Strong first-half sales at **Christie's International**, the fine art auctioneer, failed to stir buyers and the shares ended 2p lower at 293½p.

Retailers were in the thick of the action, with further talk of healthy consumer spending. J **Sainsbury** continued its recent run inspired by better sales figures, with its shares adding 8p to 428½p.

Kingfisher, **Argos**, **House of Fraser** and **Oasis**, the fashion retailer, were among the risers while **Storehouse**, the BHS to Mothercare group, was cheered 6½p higher to 211½p after its recent annual meeting.

Profit-taking trimmed **Dixons** back 7½p to 546p after the good rises seen in the wake of its bullish trading statement. **Burton** ended 1½p lower at 124p after news of the resignation of Stuart Rose, chief executive of Burton subsidiaries, Dorothy Perkins and Principles.

British Biotech, the pharmaceutical company, was squeezed in earlier trading in response to concerns over dealys to drug trials. More than 11 million shares changed hands and the price touched a trading low of 130p before ending at 154½p, up 2p. **Medeva** eased 2p to 256p ahead of its results next week. **Cantab Pharmaceuticals** ended 20p lower at 827½p, while **Biocompatibles** fell 52½p to £12.22½p on further worry over delays signing a key deal with Johnson & Johnson.

Shield Diagnostics, the healthcare group reporting next week, was in demand, helped by an encouraging broker's note. Its shares rose 25p to 525p.

AIM-quoted **Lawrence**, the pet care group, rose 10p to 390p after year-end results showed an increase in pre-tax profits from £1.82 million to £2.18 million. The group is paying a total dividend of 7.77p.

☐ **GILT-EDGED:** The gilts market ended the week on a strong note, following the equities markets. Trading picked up in the afternoon, helped by increased switching into futures contracts and the subsequent announcement of a Treasury auction. In futures, the September series of the long gilt ended up £$^{20}/_{32}$ at £114 $^{27}/_{32}$ on volume of 90,000. In shorts, the Treasury 8 per cent 2000 closed up £$^{8}/_{32}$ at £102$^{19}/_{32}$ while in longs, Treasury 8 per cent 2015 ended up £$^{21}/_{32}$ at £110 $^{16}/_{32}$.

☐ **NEW YORK:** Shares on Wall Street made rapid gains in morning trading underpinned by a firm bond market. The Dow Jones industrial average at midday was up 47.05 points at 7,933.81.

Shares in Cash Converters, the retailer, rose 3p to 18½p after a third of the holding of Brian Cumins, its founder, was acquired by two of the group's senior managers. The shares were encouraged by upbeat comments on trading and the prospect of increased dividend payments.

MOVERS OF THE WEEK

	Current price	Week's change	
Sainsbury	428½	+52	Rally on sales figures
Dixons	546	+70½	Strong consumer spending
Woolwich	299½	-68	Volatile early trading
BT	440½	-61	Shock MCI warning
Pearson	678½	-31½	Forecast downgrade
Biocompatibles	1222½	-162½	Worries over key deal
BA	693½	+13½	Rally in spite of strike
Whitbread	832	+40	Strong sector support
NatWest Bank	868½	-19	After bid speculation

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):

Dow Jones	7933.81 (+47.05)
S&P Composite	916.89 (+3.11)

Tokyo:

Nikkei Average	19875.49 (+120.71)

Hong Kong:

Hang Seng	15225.29 (+386.06)

Amsterdam:

EOE Index	936.51 (+11.80)

Sydney:

AO	2699.10 (+4.70)

Frankfurt:

DAX	4040.97 (+48.59)

Singapore:

Straits	1967.14 (-1.20)

Brussels:

General	14055.83 (+23.43)

Paris:

CAC-40	2941.59 (+12.50)

Zurich:

SKA Gen	1190.80 (-8.60)

London:

FT 30	3052.7 (+15.4)
FTSE 100	4799.5 (+31.7)
FTSE 250	4408.3 (+22.11)
FTSE 350	2301.8 (+14.6)
FTSE Eurotrack 100	2657.44 (+9.20)
FTSE All-Share	2250.41 (+13.23)
FTSE Non Financials	2267.59 (+12.77)
FTSE Fixed Interest	125.00 (-0.17)
FTSE Govt Secs	97.15 (+0.38)
Bargains	54752
SEAQ Volume	972.2m
US$	1.6945 (+0.0370)
German Mark	2.9982 (+0.0427)
Exchange Index	105.0 (+1.2)
Bank of England official close (4pm)	
£:ECU	1.4976
£:SDR	1.2146
RPI	157.5 Jun (2.9%) Jan 1987=100
RPIX	156.7 Jun (2.7%) Jan 1987=100

RECENT ISSUES

AIT	150½	...
Ashtenne	126½	...
European Mining	25	...
Galen Holdings	190	+ 7½
Grosmont Hldgs	3	...
Grosmont Hldgs Wrts	1	...
Primesight	135	...
Reabourne Merlin	110	...
Royalblue Group	208½	- 1½
SBS Group	110	...
SGB Group	156	...
Woolwich	299½	- 4½

RIGHTS ISSUES

Benchmark Gp n/p	16½	+ 1
Dragon Oil n/p (2)	¼	...
Mackie Intl n/p (20)	7½	- 1½
Marylebone Wrwck n/p	¼	...
Millwall Hldgs n/p (1)	¼	...
Waterfall Hldgs n/p	5½	...

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:

Granada	786p (+48p)
Shield Diag	525p (+25p)
Whitbread	832p (+39p)
GEC	377p (+17½p)
Scot & New	739p (+32½p)
Carlton Comm	517p (+16½p)
Prudential	600p (+16p)
GKN	996p (+25p)
Total Systems	53½p (+10p)
Bodycote	805p (+37½p)
Greenalls Group	470p (+17½p)
Hammerson	477½p (+16½p)
British Land	629p (+21½p)
Inchcape	284½p (+9½p)
Carpetright	540p (+17½p)
Gearhouse Group	336½p (+10p)
TI	495p (+12½p)

FALLS:

BT	440½p (-37p)
Celltech	247½p (-14p)
Cafe Inns	200p (-8½p)
Dorling Kind	232p (-7½p)
Safeway	389p (-10½p)
Cantab Pharms	827½p (-20p)
Boots	774½p (-17p)
Capital Radio	506p (-9p)

Closing Prices Page 43

TEMPUS

Alarm bells

PANIC about the BT-MCI merger was almost palpable yesterday as arbitrageurs flailed about trying to reposition themselves in two sliding stock prices. The problem for fund managers is not the anticipated MCI losses. The US company expects to run up a deficit of some $1.4 billion (£830 million) over the next two years as it fights tooth and nail with the Baby Bells for local telephone subscribers. These are big numbers, but nothing that BT's balance sheet could not absorb with equanimity if the outcome was a profitable local network. Even if MCI lost $1 billion in its local business next year, that would represent only 4p on the BT share price.

The nagging question is who is in the driving seat? When the deal was stitched together a year ago, this column questioned whether BT was paying an excessive entry price to join a high-risk venture aimed at breaking into local telephone monopolies in the United States. If MCI's problems were technical or market-driven BT could easily sanction a doubling of the investment, but the buccaneering US company is facing political problems enforcing federal legislation at a local level. Meanwhile, the Baby Bells are well prepared to fight dirty to defend their patch. Clearly, this is not just a two-year or even three-year problem.

Most worrying of all was the silence yesterday from Sir Peter Bonfield, who seemed to know little about the problems and less about the solutions. Curious, given that BT has spent years fighting off interlopers in its home market. If the company was in the dark about the potential cost of the dirty war between MCI and the Baby Bells, then its investors have been taken for a ride.

Unfortunately, there is no one pushing to renegotiate this merger. Certainly not the MCI bosses who stand to profit, nor the arbitrageurs who sought a cheap way into BT stock, nor Sir Peter who may now be feeling embarrassed. For BT shareholders, the best hope is that the US competition authorities send the merger back to the drawing board.

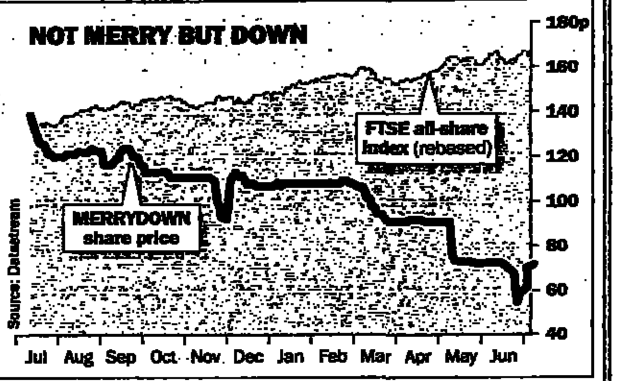
Merrydown

A YEAR is a long time in the drinks world. Twelve months ago, Merrydown was being praised to the skies for its canny acquisition of the rights to make and sell Two Dogs alcoholic lemonade. While its core cider market remained tough, the popular alcopop helped the group to turn a loss of £2.7 million into a profit of £2.03 million.

This time around, the picture is rather different. Copycat products intensified competition, and Bass has flexed its marketing and distribution muscle to keep Hooper's Hooch ahead of the pack. Sainsbury, Asda and the Co-op have all taken the brand off their shelves, halving its sales, and, in May, Merrydown was forced to admit defeat. A profit warning was accompanied by the news that it was handing over the distribution of Two Dogs to Scottish & Newcastle.

Yesterday, those warnings were translated into profits of just £821,000 and a cut in the dividend. Many in the City would be pleased if Richard Purdey, Merrydown's chairman, took early retirement as part of a promised slimming down in the boardroom.

Mr Purdey sees a silver lining in good sales of cider and a delay in raising duty on alcopops, but investors will not be content after a disastrous share price performance. Merrydown is best left alone to solve its problems without the distraction of a rollercoaster share price.



Lonrho

LONRHO'S London offices are becoming a popular haunt for the visiting bosses of South African mining companies. Mzi Khumalo, of JCI, was there this week, apparently only ten days or so after his rivals from Anglovaal. While Lonrho's popularity must be vaguely encouraging for holders of its bombed out shares, it remains to be seen whether any deals will emerge from all this transcontinental shuttling.

Lonrho is supposed to be turning itself into a normal company — or two normal companies if you allow for the proposed demerger — but the state of its affairs remain as opaque as ever. Having rebuffed JCI's recent merger proposal, Lonrho and the South African company cannot even agree on whether or not they are still in talks. This is par for the course. Every participant in Lonrho's drama tells you something different, which means that they cannot all be trusted.

JCI insists that it is committed to Lonrho. The company talks as if it has already exercised its £327 million option over the 26.8 per cent of Lonrho held by Anglo American Corporation, which is being forced to sell by the European Commission. But this is far from a done deal. Much to JCI's chagrin, the company's enemies portray it as a puppet of Anglo, and, circumstantially, they can mount a perfectly respectable case. Quite apart from the three Anglo directors on Ashanti's board, its 13 per cent stake in JCI, and their shared merchant bank adviser, there is the sequence of events that enabled Mr Khumalo to buy control of JCI from Anglo. From JCI's perspective, these relationships are no more than an accident of history, and the company is extremely confident that it could easily satisfy any EU objections.

One suspects that JCI's bullish approach stems from its warm relationship with Terence Wilkinson, managing director of Lonrho South Africa. Lonrho denies any boardroom split, but Sir John Craven, chairman, has appeared distinctly unenthused about a link-up with JCI.

Lonrho is unlikely to enter into serious talks until JCI's purchase of Anglo's stake is confirmed. But whether or not the EU accepts JCI's arguments, the clock is ticking on Lonrho's independence.

EDITED BY CARL MORTISHED

COMMODITIES

LIFFE

COCOA

Jul	1028-1026	Sep	1123-1122
Sep	1041-1040	Dec	1133-1132
Dec	1064-1063	Mar	1149-1144
Mar	1083-1082	May	1164-1161
May	1098-1097		
Jul	1112-1110		Volume: 4102

ROBUSTA COFFEE ($)

Jul	1757-1747	Mar	unq
Sep	1775 SLR	May	—
Nov	1750 BID	Jul	—
Jan	1700 BID		Volume: 4160

WHITE SUGAR (FOB)

Reuters		Mar	316.2-15.7
Spot: n/a		May	316.6-15.2
Aug	322.0-21.1	Aug	314.7-12.2
Oct	316.2-15.6	Oct	308.5-05.6
Dec	314.8-13.8		Volume: 4069

MEAT & LIVESTOCK COMMISSION

Average fatstock prices at representative markets on July 10

(p/kg lw)	Pig	Sheep	Cattle
GB	91.06	119.03	101.12
(+/-)	-0.74	+1.58	+1.01
Eng/Wales	91.10	116.53	101.40
(+/-)	-0.76	+1.69	+1.44
(%)	-12.0	-15.0	-5.0
Scotland	84.50	116.53	101.40
(+/-)	+0.43	+1.41	-0.84
(%)	-22.0	+26.0	+14.0

ICIS-LOR (London 6.00pm)

CRUDE OILS ($/barrel FOB)

Brent Physical	18.05	n/c
Brent 15 day (Aug)	18.05	+0.10
Brent 15 day (Sep)	18.10	+0.05
W Texas Intermediate (Aug)	19.30	+0.10
W Texas Intermediate (Sep)	19.45	+0.45

PRODUCTS ($/MT)

Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)

	Bid	Offer
Premium Unld	189 (+1)	190 (+1)
Gasoil EEC	163 (n/c)	164 (n/c)
3.5 Fuel Oil	83 (n/c)	85 (n/c)
Naphtha	175 (+1)	176 (n/c)

IPE FUTURES (GNI Ltd)

GAS OIL

Aug	161.75-62.00	Nov	167.50-67.75
Sep	163.50-64.00	Dec	169.00-69.25
Oct	165.75-66.00		Vol: 6194

BRENT (6.00pm)

Jul	18.09-18.10	Oct	18.39 BID
Aug	18.16-18.17	Nov	18.43-18.50
Sep	18.27-18.30		Vol: 17210

GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

LIFFE WHEAT (close £/t)		LIFFE BARLEY (close £/t)	
Jul	75.50	Sep	76.50
Sep	80.50	Nov	79.00
Nov	82.50	Jan	81.00
Jan	84.75	Mar	82.75
Mar	86.75	May	84.00
Volume: 422		Volume: 80	

LIFFE POTATO (£/t)

	Open	Close
Nov	unq	37.5
Mar		57.0
Apr	69.5	67.0
		Volume: 77

RUBBER (No 1 RSS Cif p/k)

Aug 60.25-60.75

LIFFE BIFFEX (GNI Ltd $10/pt)

	High	Low	Close
Jul 97	1340	1340	1335
Aug 97	1260	1260	1260
Sep 97	unq	—	1305
Oct 97	1420	1410	1415
Vol. 149 lots		Open Interest: 3236	

Index 1371 +4

LONDON METAL EXCHANGE

(Official) (Volume prev day)	Cash	3mth	Rudolf Wolff
Copper Gde A ($/tonne)	2404.0-2405.0	2273.0-2274.0	Vol: 2675500
Lead ($/tonne)	644.00-645.00	657.50-658.50	209975
Zinc Spec Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1465.0-1466.0	1474.0-1475.0	607450
Tin ($/tonne)	5470.0-5480.0	5525.0-5530.0	15885
Aluminium Hi Gde ($/tonne)	1537.5-1538.0	1562.5-1563.0	2249650
Nickel ($/tonne)	6750.0-6760.0	6870.0-6875.0	90858

LIFFE OPTIONS

		Calls			Puts		
	Series	Jul	Oct	Jan	Jul	Oct	Jan
Alld Dom	420	29	45½	52½	0½	9	17½
(*449)	460	3½	23½	40½	15	26½	37½
ASDA	140	3½	9	12½	1	6½	8½
(*142½)	160	0	2	4½	17½	19½	20½
Boots	750	22½	50	64½	7½	22	28½
(*775½)	800	2	27½	41½	26½	41½	48
Br Airways	650	43½	67	81½	0½	12	20
(*692½)	700	6½	38	52½	14	31½	40
BP	750	33½	59	71	1	18	25½
(*782½)	800	2	28	44	20½	38	47½
Br Steel	140	8½	13½	16	2½	4½	6½
(*147½)	160	1½	4½	8	14	15½	18

		Calls			Puts		
	Series	Jul	Oct	Jan	Jul	Oct	Jan
BAA	550	37	50	62	0½	8½	15
(*586½)	600	1	21	33	17½	30	36
Thames W	750	12	44½	56½	8	32½	40½
(*752)	800	1½	24½	34½	48	61	69
	Series	Aug	Nov	Feb	Aug	Nov	Feb
BTR	180	18½	24½	29	1½	8	9
(*196)	200	6½	13½	18½	9	17	18
Br Aero	1300	59	94	124	23	45½	55½
(*1327½)	1350	32½	67	98½	46½	68½	78½

		Calls			Puts		
	Series	Jul	Oct	Jan	Jul	Oct	Jan
Abby Nat	850	18	60½	84	10	48	60
(*856)	900	4	39½	61	45	77	87½
Amstrad	140	—	—	—	—	—	—
(unq)	160	—	—	—	—	—	—
Barclays	1200	31½	89½	127	12	65	85½
(*1217½)	1250	8½	65½	101½	40	91	110½
Natl Pwr	500	39½	56	64½	0	9½	15
(*539)	550	3	20½	35	14½	29½	35½
	Series	Jul	Oct	Jan	Jul	Oct	Jan
Glaxo Well	1300	23	71	105	10	55½	72½
(*1316)	1350	5	48½	79½	41½	83½	98½

LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol
Long Gilt	Sep 97	114-09	114-29	113-31	114-27	82444
Previous open interest 162998	Dec 97	113-23	114-11	113-23	114-15	498
German Govt Bond (Bund)	Sep 97	102.81	103.03	102.67	102.99	152239
Previous open interest 301637	Dec 97	101.93	102.04	101.80	102.06	3550
Italian Govt Bond (BTP)	Sep 97	136.35	136.87	136.33	136.78	34973
Previous open interest 112921	Dec 97	108.50	108.70	108.50	108.83	220
Japanese Govt Bond (JGB)	Sep 97	124.91	124.95	124.82	124.82	1637
	Dec 97	124.30	124.30	124.21	124.18325	
Three Mth Sterling	Sep 97	92.84	92.86	92.83	92.86	25426
	Dec 97	92.60	92.65	92.60	92.65	27584
Previous open interest 590241	Mar 98	92.49	92.54	92.48	92.54	11656
Three Mth Euromark	Sep 97	96.83	96.84	96.83	96.84	5227
Previous open interest 1495752	Dec 97	96.75	96.76	96.73	96.74	18553
Three Mth Eurolira	Sep 97	93.32	93.39	93.30	93.38	18741
Previous open interest 351461	Dec 97	93.74	93.80	93.71	93.78	13041
Three Mth Euroyen	Dec 97				99.19	0
	Mar 98				99.02	0
Three Mth Euroswiss	Sep 97	98.56	98.62	98.55	98.62	15651
Previous open interest 136411	Dec 97	98.43	98.49	98.41	98.49	8309
Three Mth ECU	Sep 97	95.79	95.80	95.79	95.80	639
Previous open interest 31716	Dec 97	95.79	95.79	95.76	95.79	149
FTSE 100	Sep 97	4795.0	4839.0	4741.0	4832.0	9738
Previous open interest 73162	Dec 97	4882.0	4889.0	4873.0	4894.0	248

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rates: Clearing Banks [illegible] Finance Hse 7

Discount Market Loans: O/night high: 8 Low [illegible] Week fixed: [illegible]

Treasury Bills (Dis): Buy: 2 mth [illegible]; 3 mth [illegible]. Sell: 2 mth [illegible]; 3 mth: [illegible].

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis)	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	
Sterling Money Rates	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Interbank	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Overnight: open [illegible] close 7.

Local Authority Deps	[illegible]	n/a	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Sterling CDs	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Dollar CDs	5.55	n/a	5.60	5.71	5.91
Building Society CDs	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

TREASURY BILLS: Applicts: £1,180 allotted: £200m; Bids: £98.35% received 31%; Last week: £98.34% received: 45%; Avge rate: £6.5951% last wk £6.5963%; Next week: £300m.

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

Currency	7 day	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	Call
Dollar:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Deutschemark:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
French Franc:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Swiss Franc:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Yen:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Bullion: Open $320.60-320.90 Close: $319.90-320.40 High: $321.25-321.75 Low: $319.10-319.60 AM: $320.60 PM: $319.50

Krugerrand: $320.00-322.00 (£188.00-190.00)

Platinum: $404.00 (£238.10) Silver: $4.39 (£2.585) Palladium: $169.00 (£99.60)

STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Mkt Rates for July 11	Range	Close	1 month	3 month
Amsterdam	3.3414-3.3769	3.3743-3.3769	[illegible]	[illegible]
Brussels	61.250-61.952	61.855-61.952	22-16pr	58-51pr
Copenhagen	11.303-11.428	11.412-11.420	[illegible]	[illegible]
Dublin	1.1033-1.1181	1.1161-1.1181	8pr-2ds	23-16pr
Frankfurt	2.9673-3.0000	2.9974-3.0000	[illegible]	[illegible]
Lisbon	299.52-302.76	302.07-302.55	[illegible]	[illegible]
Madrid	250.46-253.04	252.80-252.97	38-27pr	113-94pr
Milan	2894.6-2913.1	2907.9-2911.5	[illegible]	[illegible]
Montreal	2.3199-2.3253	2.3211-2.3230	0.70-0.65pr	1.43-1.34pr
New York	1.6912-1.6962	1.6942-1.6950	0.168-0.147pr	0.53-0.50pr
Oslo	12.418-12.568	12.251-12.537	[illegible]	[illegible]
Paris	10.024-10.130	10.122-10.128	[illegible]	[illegible]
Stockholm	13.039-13.144	13.122-13.141	[illegible]	[illegible]
Tokyo	192.50-193.22	192.47-192.72	[illegible]	[illegible]
Vienna	20.875-21.108	21.088-21.108	[illegible]	[illegible]
Zurich	2.4599-2.4752	2.4723-2.4752	[illegible]	[illegible]

Source: Extel Premium - pr Discount - ds.

DOLLAR RATES

Australia	1.3440-1.3449
Austria	12.43-12.44
Belgium (Com)	36.47-36.52
Canada	1.3700-1.3705
Denmark	6.7346-6.7366
France	5.9699-5.9719
Germany	1.7675-1.7681
Hong Kong	7.7460-7.7470
Ireland	1.5205-1.5225
Italy	1716.80-1717.55
Japan	113.80-113.85
Malaysia	2.5040-2.5050
Netherlands	1.9910-1.9920
Norway	7.4018-7.4068
Portugal	178.20-178.40
Singapore	1.4373-1.4383
Spain	149.32-149.46
Sweden	7.7556-7.7606
Switzerland	1.4592-1.4602

OTHER STERLING

Argentina peso*	1.6944-1.6971
Australia dollar	2.2766-2.2798
Bahrain dinar	0.6310-0.6430
Brazil real*	1.8238-1.8284
China yuan	13.852-14.152
Cyprus pound	0.8675-0.8775
Finland markka	8.7500-8.8660
Greece drachma	463.0-470.0
Hong Kong dollar	13.1202-13.1296
India rupee	59.85-60.81
Indonesia rupiah	n/a
Kuwait dinar KD	0.5060-0.5160
Malaysia ringgit	4.2403-4.2445
New Zealand dollar	2.5256-2.5290
Pakistan rupee	67.90 Buy
Saudi Arabia riyal	6.0900-6.2140
Singapore dollar	2.4377-2.4404
S Africa rand (com)	7.6410-7.7430
U A E dirham	6.1425-6.2665

*Barclays Bank GTS * Lloyds Bank*

FTSE VOLUMES

3i	1,400	Ladbroke	2,600
ASDA Gp	15,200	Land Secs	1,300
Abbey Ntl	1,200	Legal & Gn	3,100
Allnc & Leic	3,200	Lloyds TSB	6,200
Allied Dom	3,100	LucasVarity	6,100
AB Foods	181	Marks Spr	5,200
BAA	2,700	Mercury Ast	60
BAT Inds	3,100	NatWst Bk	6,000
BG	6,300	Nat Grid	7,200
BOC	607	Nat Power	4,100
BP	3,800	Next	1,100
BSkyB	4,200	Orange	1,300
BTR	7,400	P & O	1,500
BT	195,500	Pearson	2,000
Bk of Scot	2,100	PowerGen	914
Barclays	3,900	Prudential	4,600
Bass	4,000	RMC	410
Blue Circle	1,600	Railtrack	1,100
Boots	4,600	Rank Group	9,500
BAe	668	Reckitt Col	540
BA	2,000	Reed Intl	2,300
British Land	3,800	Rentokil	1,200
Brit Steel	10,900	Reuters	8,000
Burmah Cstl	795	Rio Tinto	3,100
Cable Wire	3,800	Rolls Royce	4,700
Cadbury	2,000	Royal & Sun	3,800
Carlton Cms	2,700	Royal Bk Sct	1,100
Centrica	3,000	Safeway	7,000
Cm Union	4,000	Sainsbury	10,300
Dixons	4,900	Schroders	216
EMI	1,700	Scot & New	3,300
Energy Gp	2,700	Scot Power	3,100
Enterpr Oil	756	Svrn Trent	120
GKN	1,300	Shell Trans	8,300
GRE	1,600	Siebe	1,000
GUS	4,600	SmKl Bch	4,200
Gen Acc	1,900	Smiths Inds	1,300
Gen Elec	11,400	Std Chartd	4,200
Glaxo Well	3,100	TI Gp	5,100
Granada	5,000	Tate & Lyle	3,300
Grand Met	3,800	Tesco	3,800
Guinness	3,000	Thames W	114
HSBC	2,100	Tomkins	2,800
Halifax	6,600	Unilever	1,500
Hanson	2,400	Utd Utilities	1,400
Hays	1,200	Utd News	693
ICI	4,400	Vodafone	6,600
Imp Tob	4,000	Whitbread	2,200
Kingfisher	1,900	Wolseley	1,500
LASMO	3,600	Zeneca	884

WALL STREET

	Jul 11 midday	Jul 10 close
AMP Inc	45½	45½
AMR Corp	93½	93½
AT & T	35½	35½
Abbott Labs	64½	65½
Advanced Micro	38½	38½
Aetna Life	103½	103½
Ahmanson (HF)	46½	46½
Air Prod & Chem	85½	86

	Jul 11 midday	Jul 10 close
Edison Int	24½	24½
Elec Data Sys	42½	42½
Emerson Elec	54½	55½
Engelhard Corp	21½	21½
Enron Corp	41½	41
Entergy	27½	27½
Ethyl Corp	9½	9½
Exxon	62½	61½

	Jul 11 midday	Jul 10 close
Oryx Energy Co	20½	20½
Owens Corning	42½	42½
PPG Industries	60½	60½
PMI Group	63½	63½
PNC Bank	42½	42½
PP&L Res	19½	19½
Paccar Inc	47½	46½
Pacificorp	23½	23½

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CHANGE OF HEART 38

Three-month battle over renting out

WEEKEND MONEY

HARD LINE 39

Lender calls in debt after five years

THE TIMES: PERSONAL FINANCE NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

ALAN ADLER

Tickets still left for society ball

Marianne Curphey explains why aspiring carpetbaggers could still be windfall winners

For those people who will come to the end of this summer not a penny richer as a result of the conversion of four building societies and Norwich Union, all is not lost.

There is still time to join the carpetbaggers club, although you need to be selective. Some societies, such as the Nationwide — top tip to be taken over — have closed their doors to new members because of the huge number of speculators.

The City has put a price tag of £7 billion on Nationwide, which would give members a windfall of about £1,500 each at takeover. Nationwide has come under pressure from carpetbaggers who are trying to win places on the board.

NPI is more difficult to price, but is the subject of constant rumour. Both the Halifax bank and AMP of Australia are thought to be interested in bidding. Though NPI is not one of the best-performing pension providers, speculators can gain membership by investing £20 gross a month into NPI's pension, or £2,000 in its Balanced Bond. The latter allows investment of up to 60 per cent in the with-profit fund.

Chartwell Investment Management, an independent financial adviser in Bath, has calculated that each member of a life company that is taken over could be entitled to between £700 and £900.

Of the large remaining building societies, Bradford & Bingley, with a potential price tag of £1.5 billion, is likely to give each qualifying member around £1,500. Analysts believe that if the Nationwide is forced to convert as a result of the vote by members on July 24 at its annual meeting, then Bradford & Bingley and Britannia will come under pressure and may merge.

That combined society would then be big enough to float on the stock market. Currently, you need £500 to open a Bradford & Bingley instant-access account and £2,000 to open a Britannia 90-day notice account. Carpetbaggers should ensure they open a share account.

A domino effect could then follow. The Yorkshire, which is staunchly pro-mutual, could be forced to merge or convert, yielding £1,500 for each member. Its branch-based share account requires a minimum £2,000. Birmingham Midshires would yield around £1,200. Carpetbaggers need £2,500 to invest. The Portman, which requires a minimum opening balance of £1,000, could yield a windfall of £1,000.

The National Counties, which has only one branch in the country, would yield an estimated £5,000. However, it will only open new share accounts to existing members or their families, who need a minimum £3,000.

Some societies have been making efforts to deter carpetbaggers. Last month the Coventry raised minimum opening balances to £2,500. Lambeth closed all but one account and raised the threshold to £5,000. While societies rapidly close their doors to speculators, it is still possible to buy a policy from a mutual life insurer with a small sum. Unlike building society accounts, however, these contracts need to be kept up for at least five to ten years.

The hotly rumoured takeover target in this sector is Friends Provident, where with-profit savings plans require a minimum £35 a month and pensions £20 a month gross or a single premium of £1,000 gross. Chartwell (01225 446 556) will open accounts for an administration fee of £30 in other life insurers that are potential converters, including Britannia Life, Equitable Life, National Mutual, Royal Liver, Wesleyan, Standard Life, Scottish Provident, Scottish Life and Scottish Widows.

Patrick Connolly of Chartwell said he had been inundated with calls from life company carpetbaggers. He said: "In time, mutual insurers are likely to raise their minimum monthly premiums to deter speculators."

He believes that it may be several years before Standard Life demutualises, while other insurers like Scottish Provident and Scottish Life may change status much sooner.

Scottish Life has a with-profit savings policy starting at £25 a monthy, while for pension contracts there is no minimum premium on their regular contributions and a minimum premium of £1,000 on single contributions.

However, analysts believe that NPI, National Mutual and some of the Scottish mutual insurers are unlikely to convert or allow themselves to be taken over while the UK stock market is still rising. They argue that while the FTSE 100 is strong, these mutuals will have no problem paying out bonuses. It is only during a period of low or negative returns that they will feel under pressure to find a parent.

☐ Time has almost run out for Halifax members wishing to put windfall shares into a Pep on the best possible terms (Gavin Lumsden writes). Inland Revenue rules allow free shares to be transferred into a Pep on top of the annual allowance of £9,000, provided this occurs within 42 days of the shares being issued. For Halifax members, this deadline expires tomorrow.

Halifax's administration centre at 5 Rayleigh Road, Shenfield, Brentwood, Essex, is accepting completed application forms until 11pm on Sunday. Its Pep helpline is 0345 770 066. Fidelity is keeping its Tonbridge, Kent, office open until midnight on Sunday (helpline 0800 414161). Mercury will accept applications by hand until noon today at its head office at 33 King William Street, London.

WEEKEND MONEY
is edited by Anne Ashworth

Havens for older savers lose appeal

The traditional safe havens for older savers — pensioners' bonds and gilts — are looking distinctly less attractive this week after the third rise in base rates in three months, prompting speculation that National Savings may have to increase its rates.

With a new base rate of 6.75 per cent, the 7 per cent offered on National Savings pensioners' bonds has little appeal, particularly since the over-60s must lock away their money for five years to get the full rate.

National Savings said: "Our rates are determined by the yield on gilts, not base rate changes. Each product has its own gilt comparator so if there's a change it would prompt us to change our rates. There is not much movement in five-year money rates, which is why we have not changed the rate on the pensioners' bond."

At the same time, National Savings has a mandate to raise money for the Government — £3 billion this year — and it can do this only if products attract enough custom.

A number of banks and building societies have recently improved rates on their savings accounts.

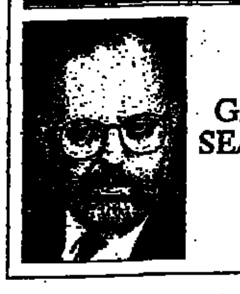
Portman Building Society now has an instant-access account that is paying 5.25 per cent gross on deposits of £100 or more. However, the minimum amount required to open an account is £1,000. Rates on the Portman's monthly interest account are now 6 per cent.

Savers' rates have also risen on the Chelsea Building Society's postal classic account, with rates starting at 3.25 per cent for balances of £2,500 to £4,999, rising in stages to 5.50 per cent on balances in excess of £50,000.

KAREN ZAGOR

Cash makes a comeback

PERSONAL INVESTOR



GRAHAM SEARJEANT

This week's quarter point on interest rates does not seem much. But three in short order are beginning to add up and the markets will be surprised if the 6.75 per cent base rate does not become 7 per cent before too long. After losing its appeal for five years, cash suddenly looks more attractive.

For savers, this has come at just the right time. Millions face a lengthy rethink after Gordon Brown's havoc-wreaking Budget. New investment in personal equity plans has lost much of its appeal for standard-rate taxpayers, even if dividend tax relief does not end until 1999. Remember, though, that higher-rate taxpayers still benefit and that corporate bond Peps do not lose relief on interest income.

By 1999 individual savings accounts, or Isas, are promised. But that does not make it any easier to plan long-term savings now. The new vehicle's shape has not yet been revealed to potential customers or to those permitted to market them, whoever they may be. The details have not even been decided.

The many millions whose pensions rely on investment returns rather than employers' promises know that those pensions are likely to be less than projected a month ago. How much less will vary with age and is hard to quantify. Dividend-based actuarial sums applied to final-salary schemes are only a rough guide. The measures that threaten to cut real returns by half a point a year (perhaps 12 per cent) may eventually cut income on pension annuities too.

Middle-aged savers who have windfalls might sleep sounder if they bung them into their pension fund as a top-up. Young people are, in theory, hardest hit but should not rush to save more in a money-purchase fund. Pension plans are restrictive long-term commitments. Many under-30s will reckon it is not worth losing flexibility unless they can be sure that the pension regime will be stable for decades ahead.

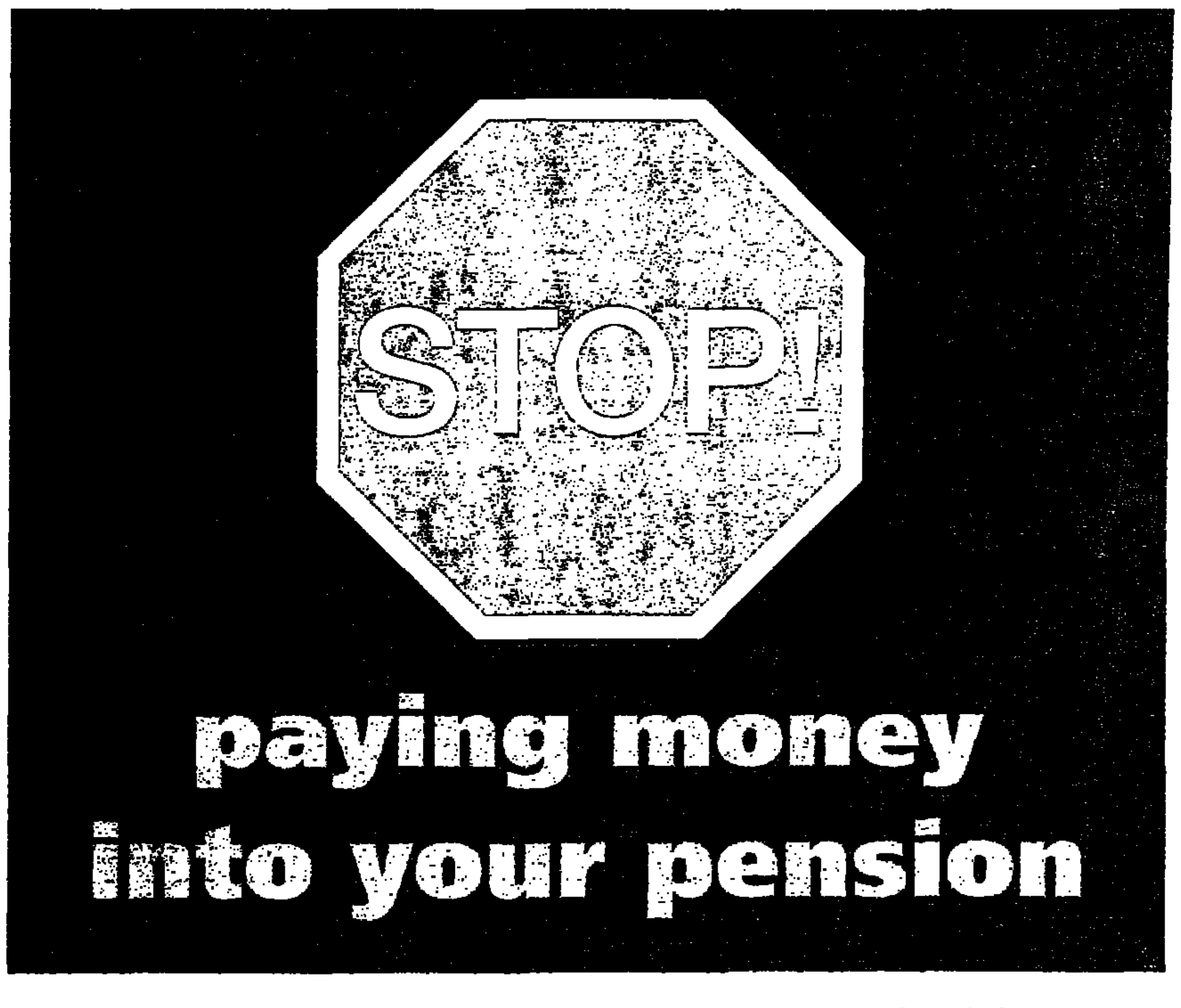
The Chancellor says his £5 billion a year raid on dividend reliefs will not hurt people's pensions. This is infinitely more outrageous than Harold Wilson's 1967 claim that "the pound in your pocket or purse" would not be devalued like the pound against the dollar. The new Treasury team does not seem too worried about upsetting savers' plans. Limits on tax relief for contributions are on the cards; pension companies regularly offer up tax-free lump sums as a Budget sacrifice and capital gains tax is to be restructured next year.

Cash is rarely a good home for savings for long, and savers who try to switch between cash and securities usually get their timing wrong. Just at the moment, however, there is much to be said for letting new savings accumulate in cash while the Budget sinks in.

The attraction does not lie solely in the rate. Opinions on short-term interest trends are now settling down. Prices on the Liffe futures market have for months predicted a vague rising curve, perhaps reaching 7.5 per cent eventually, perhaps 8 per cent. Futures prices now present a clearer, more convincing picture. They project a modest rise to a peak of about 7.35 per cent in the next nine months, and rates staying at about 7.25 per cent for two years.

After the Budget, it is a fair bet that base rates will stay at or above today's rate for a year or more. When base rates reached 6.75 per cent in 1995, they stayed for a year. Long-term interest rates were then quite a bit higher than cash. Today there is little difference. If base rates stay relatively high, the chances of a setback to UK share prices also grow markedly. Lower corporation tax may permit higher dividends but net yields average only 2.8 per cent and the high pound will hit export earnings or the sterling value of foreign profits for many top groups.

Bonds look a sound medium-term bet if inflation stays under control but may make little progress against rising cash interest rates. For the saver prepared to hunt for the best rates, deposits of up to a year in unconverted building societies combine common sense with the added attractions of a lottery.



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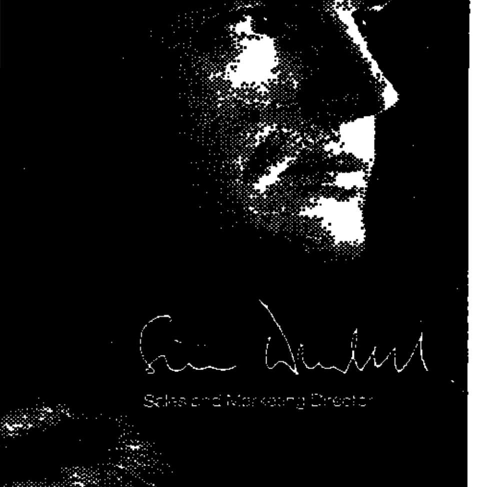

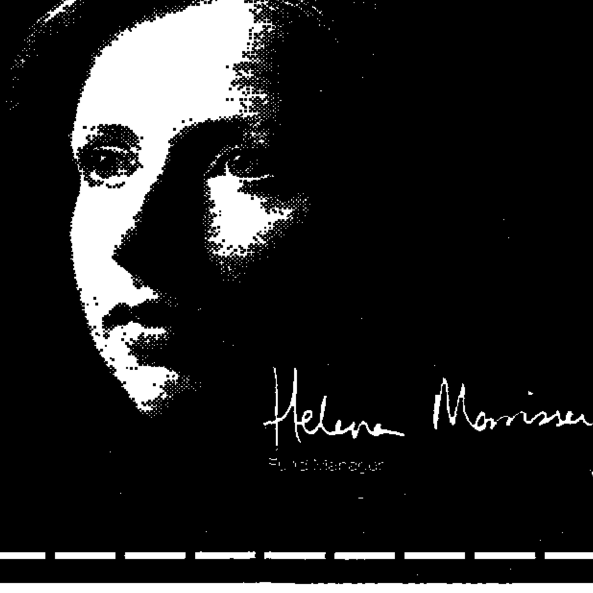

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T/0018

Helen Pridham on what to look for in an annual travel policy

Hopefully travelling more than once a year

Travel policies covering 12 months are becoming more popular as many people start to take more than one holiday a year. Their cost is sometimes little more than you would pay for single-trip insurance, especially if you buy through a travel agent.

The cost difference has been accentuated since April 1 when travel insurance bought as part of a package holiday started incurring insurance premium tax (IPT) at 17.5 per cent, while travel insurance bought separately is only subject to IPT at 4 per cent.

Annual policies can be purchased at banks, post offices, building societies, travel and medical insurers, such as Bupa. Assitalia Protect, a new annual policy available from insurance brokers, has just been launched by the British Insurance and Investment Brokers' Association (BIIBA).

Comparisons between policies tend to focus on premium cost. Benefits such as medical expenses or baggage cover may be highlighted and attention drawn to whether "hazardous activities" are covered. However, other aspects of cover on annual policies need to be considered.

Trip lengths: annual policies usually cover an unlimited number of holidays but maximum trip length can vary. Usually it is 31 days but some policies allow longer. The new BIIBA policy has a 45-day maximum but WorldCover Direct covers up to 93 days.

Ski cover: if you are taking out an annual policy to cover both summer and winter holidays, check whether ski cover is included. Not all insurers include it on a standard policy. Among those which do are Yorkshire Bank and Halifax which both allow a skiing holiday of up to 21 days on basic annual policies. Woolwich and Barclays do not include this cover as standard.

Family policies: most annual policies have a family cover option for two adults and two or three children. Children under two or three often have free cover. Under the Post Office, General Accident and the BIIBA policies, only children up to the age of 16 are counted. For any child of 16 or over, the full adult rate is charged — that could add £60 to £70 per child to the cost of the annual policy. Some policies such as those from Halifax and Yorkshire Bank include children up to 18. Woolwich and WorldCover Direct cover children up to 23 in full-time study living at home.

Separate travel: do not assume a family annual travel policy covers members travelling separately as well as together. Under the Post Office policy, for example, only the policyholder is covered when away from the family. Many policies, though, allow adults to travel separately but not children. They must always be with at least one adult. Some policies cover children travelling separately — useful if your children go on holiday with other families or on exchange visits. BIIBA's policy provides this cover for children up to 16. WorldCover Direct does so for children up to 23. Bupa has two travel policies — the gold version allows for separate travel including children up to 18, but its basic policy requires the policyholder to accompany any other member of the family including the spouse.

Business travel: annual policies are mainly for leisure trips but some include business travel, including those from Yorkshire Bank and Barclays. Bupa, WorldCover Direct, and BIIBA policies can be extended to include it.

UK holidays: cover for UK holidays is included in most annual policies. If a family member goes to hospital while away, the policy will cover the cost of transfer back to a local hospital, or if you have to cut short your holiday because of illness the balance of accommodation costs are covered.

PAUL HACKETT

If your flight is cancelled, are you covered? — see below

Your rights and cancelled flights

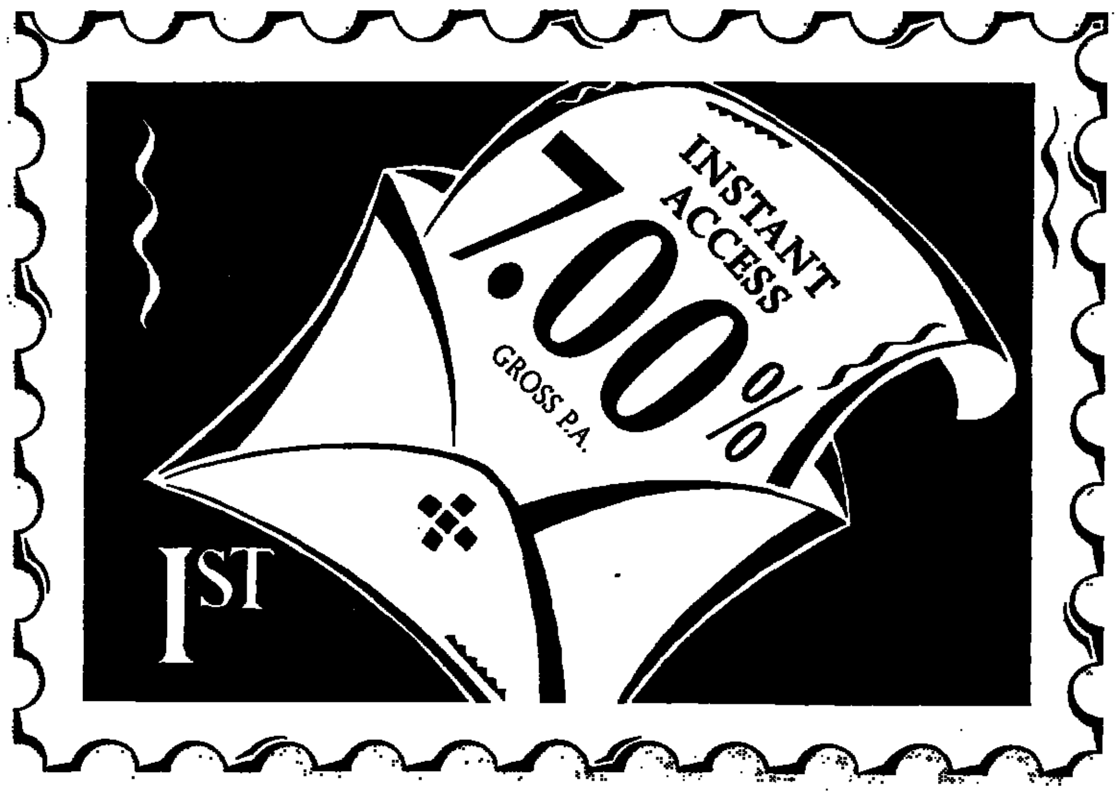
Thousands of holidaymakers have been suffering the misery of cancelled or delayed flights this week during the British Airways strike. For many, frustration will be compounded by fears that entire summer holiday budgets may be wasted.

Strike victims can take scant comfort from BA's "goodwill" package, which is currently limited to free meals and other expenses incurred during the period of delay. Those prudent enough to take out travel insurance can expect to recoup at least some of their losses. Most policies will pay compensation to customers who have their holidays shortened or cancelled by strikes, and insurers are bracing themselves for a flood of claims. However, even for the insured, there are pitfalls to avoid.

If insurance is taken out for a holiday which is already known to be facing disruption, travellers are likely to be barred from making strike-related claims. Leading companies such as Eagle Star and Commercial Union are among those who revoke cover after strike action is announced, so if you are thinking of taking a risk on your flight escaping a strike, it may be wise to think again.

Most insurers pay out flight delay compensation of between £10 and £20 for every 12-hour wait. Some allow customers to abandon their holidays with a full refund after the first 12 hours of a delay, but there are exceptions and it pays to check the small print. Home & Overseas Insurance, which provides many of the policies offered by travel agents and tour operators, admits that a minority of its policies do not refund on abandonment.

NATHAN YATES



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Beware insurers bearing gifts

COMMENT

ANNE ASHWORTH

Personal Finance Editor

Caroline Conran's celebrated £10.5 million divorce settlement did not apparently include a percentage of Sir Terence's pension, probably to the relief of the already outraged restaurateur.

The ex-wives of less exalted businessmen will be hard pressed to equal her achievement. But at least those who have supported their husbands' careers, rather than pursuing their own, now have the right to claim a share of their spouses' pensions on divorce.

However, those who stay married and do not pursue paid employment are still not entitled to save for their own pensions, a considerable injustice. The Inland Revenue insists that pension contributions are made from earnings. This rule leaves many wives, mothers and those caring for the elderly without provision for their own old age. They may not be entitled to state pensions in their own right and are dependent on the provision made by their spouses. This underpensioned group of women has now become the new target market for the insurance industry, anxious to show its caring face. The insurers have proposed that those in unpaid or low-paid employment have access to low-cost pensions (see page 37). The move, the insurers' contribution to the Government's plans for a citizen's pension, should arouse suspicions. Mindful of their poor reputation in government circles, the insurers wish to show that they can act responsibly with the nation's money. But those who saw how these companies treated public sector workers, enticing them from secure occupational schemes into poor-value personal plans, would be nervous about giving them free rein to approach another vulnerable group.

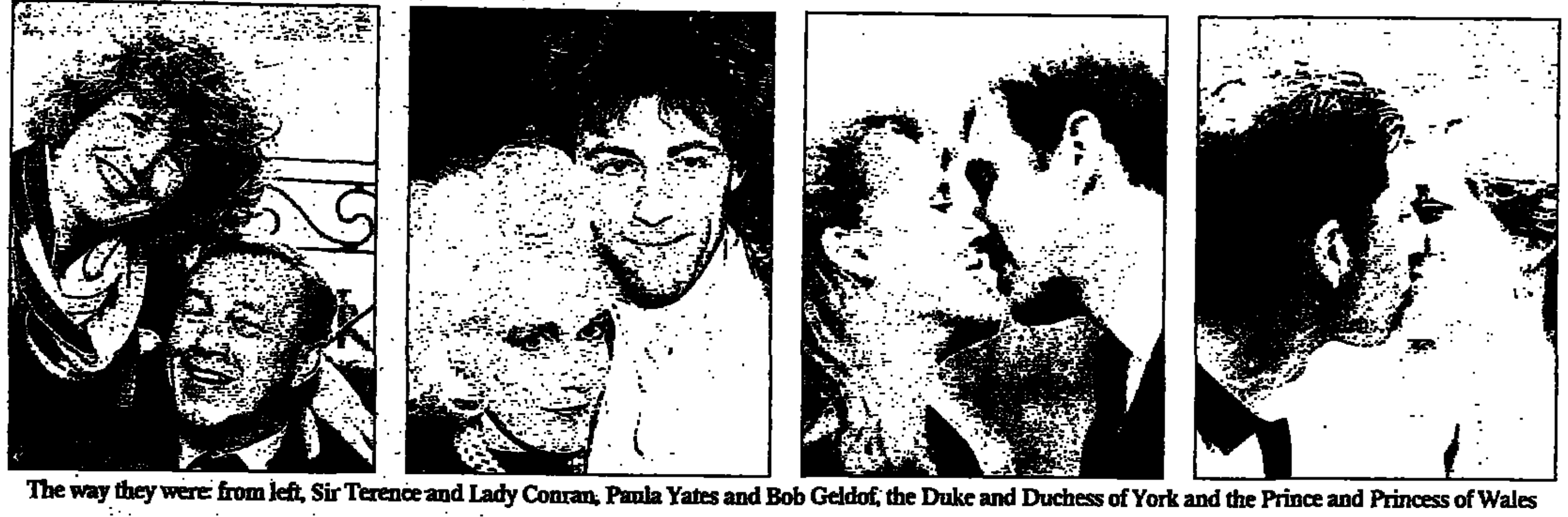
At variance

THE interest rate rise will speed the rush to fixed-rate mortgages. But those impressed by advantageous rates should ask about the extras. Nationwide, for example, obliges fixed-rate customers to take its house and contents insurance. The commission funds part of the discount.

Aspiring borrowers should also inquire about the lender's variable rate, which they will pay at the end of the fixed-rate period. *Moneyfacts* research shows that the interest repayments on a £50,000 loan between July 1996 and June 1997 varied between £3,398 at the Yorkshire Building Society and £3,698 at Bank of Ireland Mortgages.

Karen Zagor has a checklist for working wives heading for court

Get aboard early just in case



The way they were: from left, Sir Terence and Lady Conran, Paula Yates and Bob Geldof, the Duke and Duchess of York and the Prince and Princess of Wales

Sir Terence Conran has this week once more complained of the generosity of the £10.5 million divorce settlement to his former wife which he sees as an unfortunate precedent for future divorces. The judge held that Caroline Conran, a food writer, had played a crucial role in the success of the Conran design and restaurant empire. But Sir Terence has described the judgment as "Mills & Boon in style and riddled with inaccuracies".

The view of a marriage as a quasi-business partnership is not new. The royals, for example, often describe themselves as co-workers in the family firm. The success and high public profile of one partner can help the other's drive for fame, as instanced by Paula Yates and Bob Geldof, another celebrity pairing which ended in the divorce courts last year.

Lady Conran might have spared herself a lot of worry in the run-up to the divorce if she had had the foresight to spell out her role in her husband's business from the start.

Frances Hughes, head of family law at Bates, Wells & Braithwaite, the solicitor, said: "Quite often a woman's contributions get lost because they tend to play behind-the-scenes roles in a business, acting as hostesses, giving advice and helping to arrange loans, but not actively running it."

A bit of careful planning in the halcyon days of a relationship is a sensible precaution in case things turn sour. If, like Lady Conran, you are an invisible force in your husband's business, there are ways of making sure your contributions are reflected on divorce. "A spouse's support can make a big difference to someone running a business. If you help behind the scenes you should think about sharing some of the benefits, such as bonuses, as they come along," said Ms Hughes.

Wives also need to take account of their more concrete contributions. If you are going to be part of the business, then make sure you go along with your husband to see bank managers and lawyers. If you have helped to negotiate the company's financing, or were part of the planning and strategy stage of setting up a business, make sure your role is documented.

"Men tend to have the knowledge base because they are the ones actively running the business. But the more you know, the more secure your financial position will be if your marriage founders," she said. One way of ensuring access to the accounts and solidifying your involvement is to join the board. You must be voted on but there is no reason for a wife not to be on the board of a company she has helped to establish.

> Once a divorce goes through, there is little chance to go back on arrangements

If you have an active role, make sure you are one of the directors when the company is established. Your specific responsibilities should be put on paper and there should be a contract of employment with a specific job description.

But there is no reason to be cut out if your role is less tangible. A supportive spouse can always be a non-executive director. This does not demand any responsibilities for the day-to-day running of a company but does carry certain responsibilities such as making sure it is being run in good faith. As a non-executive director you can receive fees and then be part of the company pension scheme.

Being on the board makes it easier to keep tabs on the company's finances. If your husband has run up big debts, you will find out about them more easily if you are on the board. And if the company is not being run in the shareholders' best interests, you can always resign.

"The only downside is that, in law, you have a joint responsibility of running the company in a reasonable way. But if your spouse is running the company in a fraudulent way it is better to know," said Ms Hughes. If your marriage breaks down, some steps should be taken regardless of joint business arrangements. Joint accounts and joint credit-card accounts should be closed to prevent your ex from going on a spending spree. If possible, loans, overdrafts and HP agreements should be separated. If the family house is not in your name, put a charge on it, registering your right to occupy. This prevents your partner from quietly remortgaging or transferring it.

With a new Government in power, last year's Family Law Act is in question. This may mean further legislation will be sought for splitting of pension funds between spouses. Ms Hughes said: "Women still need to plan for old age. And there is also the danger that splitting the pension too early could reduce the pension fund." Most important is to make sure all is in order before seeking a decree absolute. Once a divorce goes through, it is harder to go back on financial arrangements.

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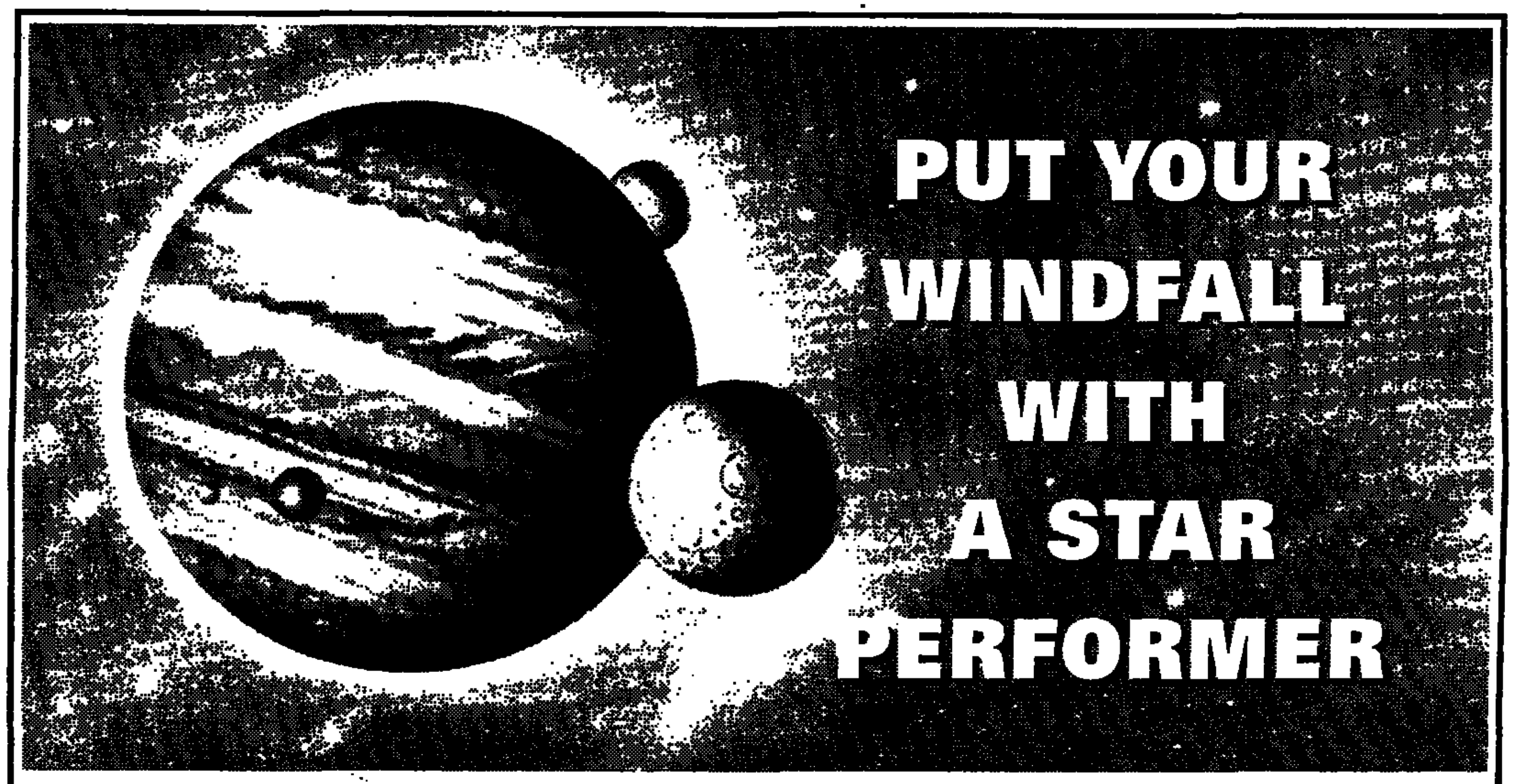

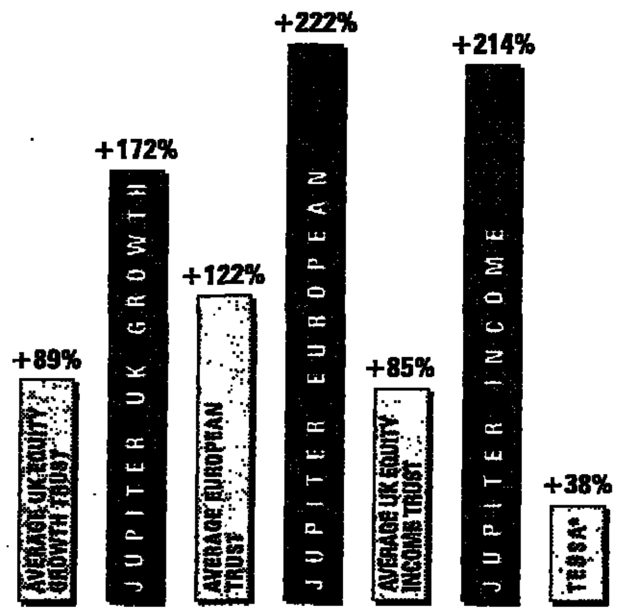

Jupiter unit trusts compared with sector averages and TESSA

Source Micropal. Offer to bid, net income reinvested, 5 years to 1.7.97
**UK Savings TESSA £3,000 investment index*

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Nathan Yates fears that many pensioners face a bleak future

Days of revolution

THE MANSELL COLLECTION

Shareholders in high-yielding investment trusts are likely to see their dividends guillotined in Gordon Brown's investment revolution. Analysts say high yielders face a bleak future after Budget measures. Many fear the Government's pursuit of "long termism" will place income investors on the block.

Investment trusts which focus on maximum dividends are some of the best options for investors not seeking growth. Many of these are pensioners relying on their holdings to live. They can obtain a flow of returns from high income trusts, which pump up to 80 per cent of their assets into companies with large dividends, or from income shares in a split-capital trust. The latter divide their shares into different types to cater for different kinds of investor. In return for relinquishing capital growth, their income shares cream off most of the trust's dividend yields. Several Budget measures are likely to drive both dividends and the price of income shares down. "It would be difficult to imagine a worse Budget for high-yielding investment trusts," says Carolyn Coke of NatWest Securities.

TRUST WATCH

■ Dividend tax credit: High-yielding trusts are among the biggest victims of the Chancellor's abolition of dividend tax credit. Their big dividends were formerly attractive to tax-exempt investors such as pension funds, which could claim 20 per cent extra on each payment. With this credit gone, dividends provided by income and split-capital trusts are now far less appealing. Demand is falling, and with falling demand come falling prices. Since the cut in dividend relief was forecast by *The Times* in May, figures by Micropal show the price of high-income trusts has been kept to a 0.24 per cent rise, and the income shares of split-capital funds have dropped by 3.18 per cent. Any decrease in dividends will become apparent more slowly. Some high yielders are suffering a tax relief "double whammy" because of their income-focused portfolios. Shares in companies concentrating on short-term gain are tipped to fall after the loss of DTC.

"Trusts are going to have to throw out some of their junky no-growth stocks, again damaging their ability to maintain income levels," Ms Coke says. A report by HSBC James Capel identifies several trusts with vulnerable holdings facing a double DTC blow, including Shires Income, Glasgow Income, Merchants, Invesco Convertible, Temple Bar, Morgan Grenfell Equity Income and Foreign & Colonial Income Growth.

■ Section 242: the abolition of Section 242 claims to the Revenue was a less conspicuous Budget move, but analysts say it will also have a damaging effect on some trusts. Formerly, Section 242 permitted investment trusts to offset their management charges as expenses against tax. The Chancellor partially closed this tax advantage, and now companies can only claim against "unfranked" income — not subjected to advance corporation tax. Income funds that invest heavily in UK equities (ie, shares liable to ACT) may have insufficient unfranked income to set against charges. They face higher tax bills, and could be forced to compensate by cutting dividends. Justin Harris of HSBC James Capel saysthis may be enough to tip the balance against pension funds using trusts as investment vehicles. "Pension funds were benefiting from the Section 242 tax advantage, and now that has gone it is marginal whether they will gain from investing via a trust," he says.

■ Foreign income dividends: before the Budget, companies with a large slice of foreign earnings were permitted to pay all or part of their dividends under the foreign income dividends (Fid) scheme, which exempted them from the 20 per cent advance corporation tax (ACT) charge. The Fid scheme has been closed, and ACT will now have to be paid on dividends from investment trusts with big holdings abroad. Again, the trusts most vulnerable to the effects of this change will be those which focus on income.

☐ High-income unit trusts generally yield less than their investment trust equivalents, but some of these are also likely to be hit by Budget measures. Foreign & Colonial High Income, Morgan Grenfell High Income and Exeter High Income are among the unit trusts which place a heavy emphasis on yield at the expense of capital growth.

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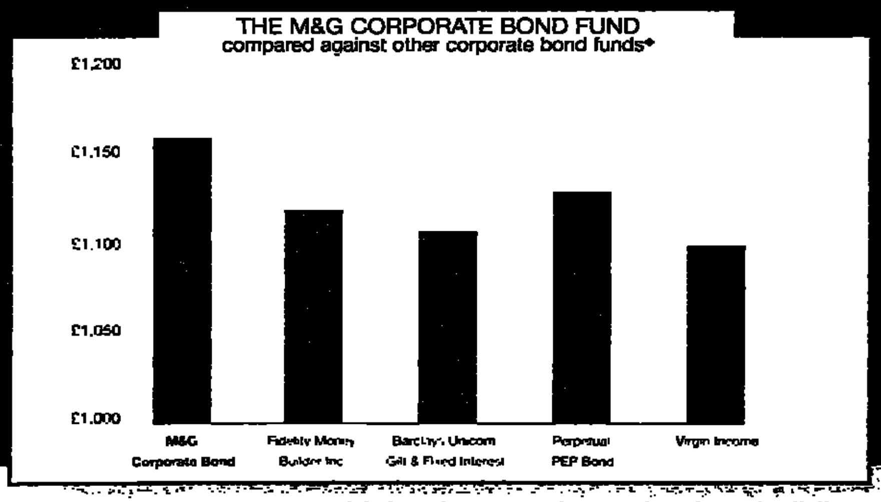

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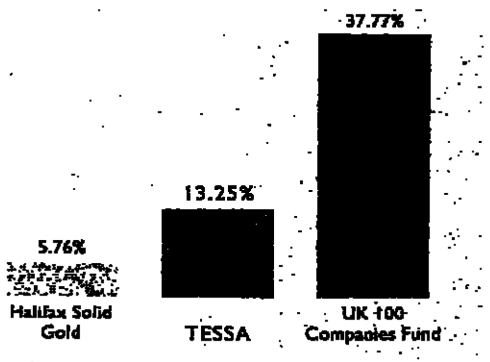

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Money placed in a building society deposit account will not fall in value, unlike stock market based investments such as unit trusts where you may not get back the amount invested. However as you can see in the chart above, unit trust based investment has outperformed these accounts in the past.

صلة اصنه الأصل

هلكذا حيز الأجل

Adam Jones says the institutional rush into tracker funds should not unduly sway private investors

STEPHEN MARKESON

Are they on the wrong track?

The continuing bull market in London has left a question mark hanging over tracker funds. These investment vehicles are designed to reproduce the return you would receive if you had shares in all the companies in the FTSE 100 or a similar index. The attraction is cheapness compared with traditional active fund management, which can often produce poor returns in spite of the huge pay packets of the managers.

While index-tracking has led to impressive recent gains, there has been understandable anxiety over how the funds would perform in a general market decline. Active fund managers have the chance of picking a stock which bucks the market trend. Tracker funds have no such recourse and most financial advisers have suggested caution. One would therefore expect take-up of trackers to be quite low in the first half of this year. This is not so.

Sales to the public have never been so buoyant. The end of the financial year is a traditional boom period for Pep funds. In March, the amount of public money directly tied up in tracker unit trusts, the most common form of index-tracking investment, increased by nearly £170 million.

In April, this figure was nearly £300 million, more than twice the figure for the previous April. The general election was a big factor. Many expected Gordon Brown to abolish Peps and were maximising holdings. Surprisingly, retail sales in May, the last month for which there is market-wide information from the Association of Unit Trusts and Investment Funds, have not fallen off as much as may have been expected.

Tony Wood of Virgin Direct, which now has about £750 million of client money tracking the FTSE All-Share, says sales have increased substantially in June and July.

This suggests that fears of a big market collapse are less widespread than some pundits anticipated or that the marketing campaigns by companies like Virgin are working. Tony Wood prefers to think that investors are taking a long-term view.

What is more surprising is the demand from institutions such as pension funds and insurers, who include trackers in their broad portfolios alongside direct stakes in companies, property investments and other financial instruments.

Institutional behaviour is seen as a guide by many cautious private investors. The anxiety you may feel when committing a few thousand pounds to a Pep fund will be nothing compared with the weight of responsibility oppressing the manager of a multibillion-pound pension portfolio.

TOP TRACKERS

FUND	RISE(%) 1/7/96-1/7/97
Fidelity MoneyBuilder	29.35
HSBC The Footsie Fund	28.82
CU UK Index Tracking	28.61
Lloyds Bank FTSE 100	28.46
River & Mercantile Top 100	28.40
Midland FTSE 100 Index	28.36
Direct Line FTSE 100 Tracker	28.23
Sovereign FTSE 100	27.92
Legal & Gen UK Stockmarket	27.65
Barclays Unicorn FTSE 100	27.60

All funds track FTSE 100.
All figures are based on bid-to-bid with £100 initial sum

Source: Micropal

Pension fund managers, like Tony Dye of PDFM, will sometimes take a high-profile stand on where they expect the market to be going. Mr Dye began scaling down equity holdings in favour of cash in 1995 (and has seen the markets confound his bearish prediction ever since).

Institutional buying of tracker funds has tended to reflect this caution. The net amount of institutional money going into tracker unit trusts only exceeded £30 million twice in the period from January 1996 to April 1997. On several occasions there was a net outflow of money.

However, in May 1997 more than £100 million net went into tracker funds from institutions. Ian Chimes, managing director of Credit Suisse investment funds, says this also reflects a post-election change in thinking.

In the pre-election war of words, one of the most potent fears that the Conservative Party could arouse was that a Labour election victory would spark a market correction (the polite term for a near-crash).

Quite the opposite has happened and institutions have ditched their wait-and-see policy. They are also using trackers to get exposure to the surging performance of banks and insurers. With flotations and demutualisations, these companies are starting to dominate the FTSE 100 and have driven the index's growth, which has often not filtered down to smaller companies.

Mr Chimes says buying into a tracker means institutions can have exposure to the surging financial sector without becoming too vulnerable to a change in market sentiment against the shares, currently seen as expensive against their bottom-line earnings. He says: "They wanted to make sure they didn't miss out on the financials party."

Private investors should therefore not regard this institutional interest as evidence that professional fund managers have changed their tune and are now confident that the market is bound to climb to even more dizzying heights.

If you have just a single Pep, caution is necessary, although trackers are accepted as a backbone for a broad portfolio. Buyers should also be very careful in choosing their fund as the index tracked will vary. This can mean a big difference in performance and accounts for the absence of Virgin Direct, which follows the performance of the weaker FTSE All-Share index, from our list of top-performing unit trusts.

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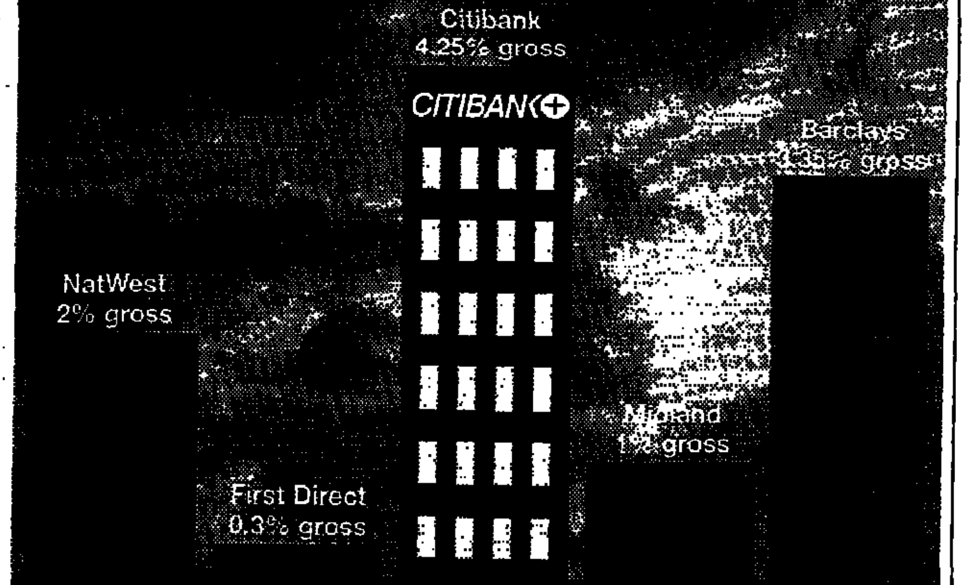

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Caution sets in after a salutary lesson

CRISPIN RODWELL

Stockpickers: members of the Maydown Mergers Investment Club, 16 per cent ahead after one-and-a-half years

Matthew Wall makes a second visit to the two investment clubs we are monitoring

Weekend Money has revisited two investment clubs featured last month to see how they are getting on in the wake of the controversial Budget from Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, and Thursday's 0.25 per cent increase in base rates.

The Maydown Mergers, based in Londonderry, Northern Ireland, have decided to rebalance their portfolio of 11 stocks to include fewer risky high-tech companies. They recently bailed out of troubled McDonnell Information Systems (MDIS), selling at 33.5p just before the shares were suspended at 23.5p on July 1. They lost £500 on their original £1,200 investment.

Mike Carroll, chairman, says: "As a result of this we have started to apply stop losses on certain stocks now, so that if they fall below 15-20 per cent of the price we paid for them, we sell."

To the undoubted chagrin of private investment gurus such as Jim Slater and Bernice Cohen, the policy is not rigidly enforced. For example, the club concluded that the biotechnology sector was too volatile and sold Peptide Therapeutics, netting a £180 profit on their original £500 investment. But they cannot bear to part with Chiroscience, despite showing a paper loss of £250 on their £500 investment. Nigel Bevington, club secretary, says: "Chiroscience is purely a speculative stock. We bought at the wrong time and we want to hang on to see if we can get our money back."

The purchase of shares in the recently floated Woolwich and Norwich Union was inspired by a desire for more solid stocks in the portfolio and the belief that the financial sector will stay strong for the rest of the year, buoyed by interest rate rises, increased levels of consumer borrowing, and continued demand from institutional investors. The club also believes there is a strong chance of a takeover or two in the sector.

The demise of MDIS has persuaded the 19-strong club, whose members all work for a *textile fibres* company, to rely less on high-tech investment tips in magazines such as *Techinvest*, and more on their own research. They are now paying more attention to earnings per share, cashflow and whether the company has an obvious competitive advantage. Their favourite and most successful stock is Powerscreen, a local automotive engineering company. They bought it at 540p a share and it is now worth 634.5p. They know the company well and like the fact that it is showing steady growth, has little debt, and occupies a niche market. They recently invested another £1,300 in the company, taking the total investment to £2,500.

Overall, the recent losses on the biotech stocks and other speculative stocks such as Kenmare Resources, an Irish mining company, has meant that the current portfolio, worth £10,300, is showing a paper loss of around £300. But there is £1,600 in the kitty and members are still around 16 per cent up on their original investment after one and a half years.

The Victoria Investment Club in Truro, Cornwall, shows no signs of adopting a more conservative approach. It wholeheartedly embraces the "small is beautiful" philosophy when it comes to stock selection and firmly believes in taking profits.

The 20-member club relishes doing deals, perhaps rather more than prudence should allow. The portfolio of 14 stocks has dropped to £21,888 in value — it was worth over £23,000 two months ago.

Despite the club's 12-year pedigree, only one stock in the portfolio has been held for more than 18 months and six of the stocks were bought in the past four months.

Paul Hanage, club treasurer, says: "We look for small, well-managed companies with the potential for good, short-term capital growth. We are very interested in watching the share dealings of company directors, especially if the shares are bought at market price rather than through their share options."

Winners include Waste Recycling Group, Chrysalis Group, Capita Group and Medeva. But one, Greenwich Resources, which has halved in value since they bought it in *1989, they still hang on to.*

Paul Hanage explains: "We keep holding it in the hope that it hits the jackpot and to remind us that not every investment is a great success in the short term, medium term and even the long term!"

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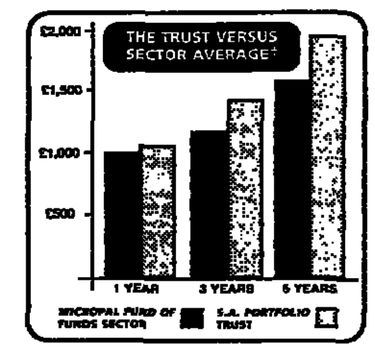

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Insurers pave way for universal pension age

Marianne Curphey on a radical plan to provide self-financed retirement benefits for the masses

A radical new proposal to create a universal pension for the 21st century based on Labour's "stakeholder" savings plan has been unveiled by insurance companies.

The proposals include the reform of the tax treatment of pensions to enable mothers who have taken a break from work to raise children or who are caring for sick or elderly relatives at home to build up a fund. People would also be allowed to contribute to more than one scheme and those with very low or no earnings could be given incentives to save.

The Association of British Insurers spent six months consulting its 430 members and drew up a plan under which even the unemployed could contribute towards their own pension.

The universal second pension would supplement, and, in time, perhaps replace, the state pension scheme. It would run parallel to but not replace occupational schemes.

This would involve reform because current Inland Revenue rules stipulate that pension premiums must be paid out of earned income.

The scheme has the support of Standard Life, the biggest life insurer in Europe, which believes that the current tax rules need to be reviewed. Peter Robertson, its assistant general manager of marketing, said the proposals needed to be sold on a "low margin rather than no margin" basis. He also believes discussions are needed to clarify how the new pension will run alongside existing provision.

The ABI's plan is based on the principle behind the US Individual Retirement Account, which is fully portable from job to job. The ABI believes that employers should contribute to the personal pension plans of individual staff.

The proposals are likely to strike a chord with the Government, which is looking to develop a "citizenship pension" to allow mothers and people caring for sick or elderly relatives to build up a fund.

A spokesman for the Department of Social Security and pensions minister John Denham said that the fund would be based on credits from an individual's national insurance contributions.

The simple design of the pension blueprint has more similarities with tax-exempt special savings accounts (Tessas) than pensions. It might offer tax relief at 50 per cent on the first £500 of contributions to encourage the low-paid to start saving. Further premiums up to a maximum of £3,000 a year would qualify for tax relief at the individual's highest rate.

The ABI envisages a product based on a simple fund tracking the performance of the FTSE All-Share index, plus exposure to index-linked gilts. People would be able to transfer to a rival provider every three years, without penalty.

The ABI believes the policy should be unit-linked and should have an annual management charge of no more than 1 per cent. It recognises that some form of compulsion may be necessary.

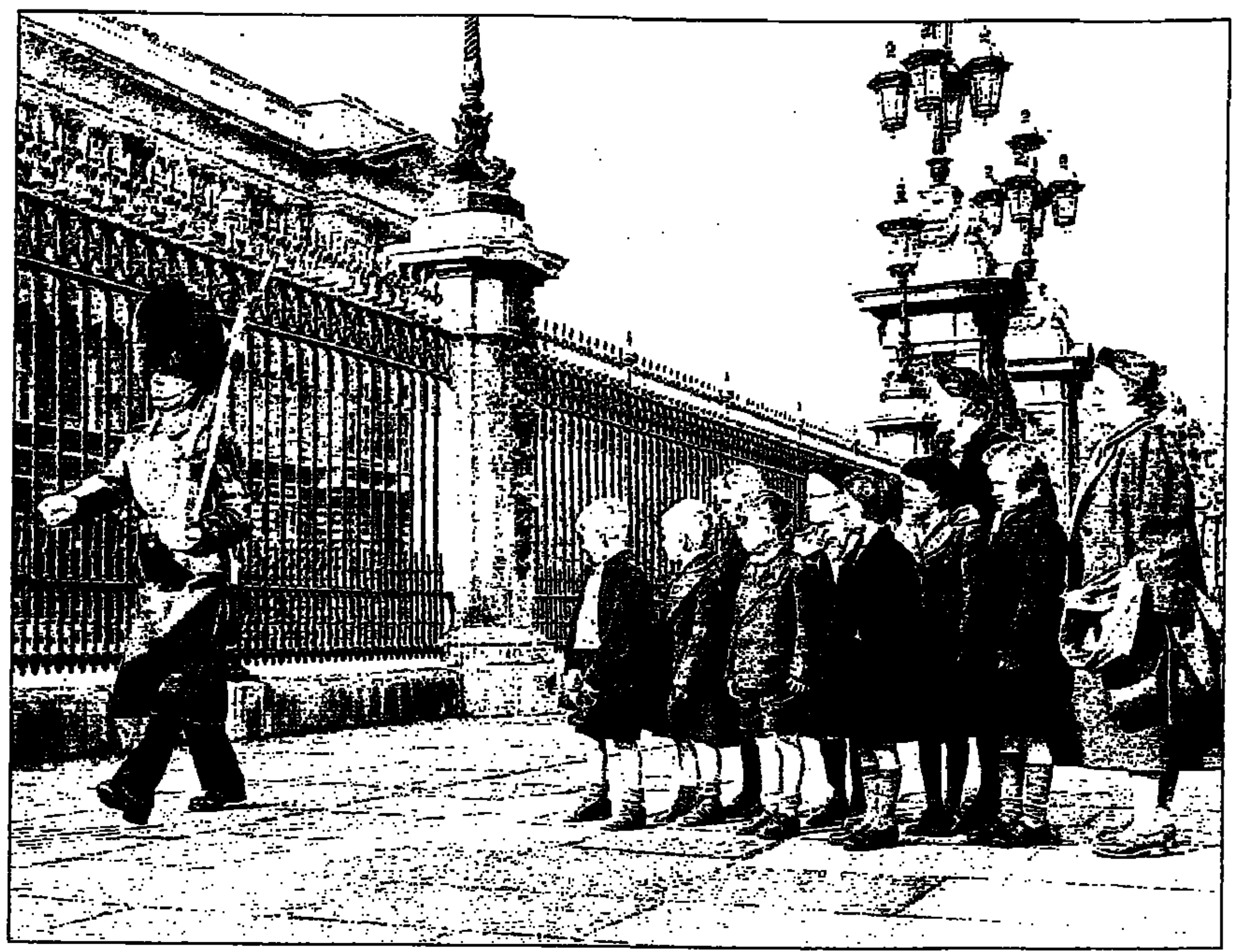
At present insurance companies and bancassurers manage £170 billion of personal pensions on behalf of six million investors. Tessas have attracted £20 billion worth of funds and personal equity plans (Peps) have brought in an estimated £35 billion.

Mark Boléat, director-general of the ABI, believes the stakeholder pension could initially attract an extra £5 billion to £10 billion a year. He said: "This is a low-margin, high-volume product designed to appeal to the masses. It needs to be cheap, simple and transparent. The quite arbitrary limits on how much people can put into their pension each year are now inappropriate in the light of changing social and employment patterns."

The ABI believes that people should be allowed to contribute to a pension whatever their yearly income, so that even if they move jobs frequently, they will have some security in old age.

It is particularly concerned that, on average, women who give up work to raise children and then return to employment never manage to achieve the same salary in real terms as they were earning when they left.

While male manual earnings in the UK peak between 40 and 49 years of age, women's average salaries peak while they are still in their twenties and before they start a family.



Women who give up work to raise children and then return never achieve the same real salary they earned before

Annuity delay could prove costly

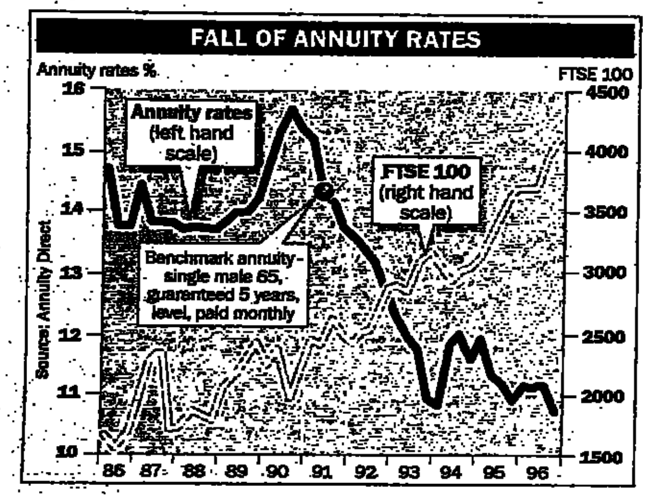
Those who have retired but not yet bought an annuity with their pension fund must act now or suffer a 10 per cent drop in their pension income for the rest of their lives.

A £100,000 pension fund which would now buy an annuity paying a guaranteed income of £10,000 a year will produce only £9,000 in three months' time, according to Billy Burrows of Annuity Direct, the independent adviser.

Changes in last week's Budget, which drastically reduced the value of pension funds by removing tax breaks on equity investment, will have a knock-on effect on annuity rates. Gilt yields, on which annuity rates are based, will fall as pension funds looking for alternative forms of investment push up gilt prices, says Mr Burrows.

The falls will mean further cuts in pensioners' incomes, which have already been falling steadily from their high of 15.6 per cent in the third quarter of 1990 to around 10 per cent now. Under current pension rules, people have to use three quarters of their pension fund to buy an annuity when they retire, which pays an income for life. Those who buy when rates are low are locked into a low income.

FALL OF ANNUITY RATES



Source: Annuity Direct

Recent rule changes have allowed people who retire when rates are low to hold off buying an annuity until they can get a better deal. While they wait they can draw income from their pensions. They have to buy an annuity when they are 75.

But this time the same Budget changes which will hit annuity rates will also hit those drawing income from pension funds. Such funds will no longer be able to claim tax breaks, cutting investment returns by up to 1 per cent a year. Mr Burrows describes this as a "double whammy" for pensioners who will end up using smaller pension funds to buy worse annuities.

SARA MCCONNELL

Progress from Century Life

The Crown Life pension affair, which affected over 100,000 members in more than 5,500 schemes, is close to resolution. Century Life, the insurance company, which took over the Crown pension scheme portfolio between October 1992 and April 1993, says that it has now provided scheme trustees with figures setting out the pension benefits available in 96.6 per cent of cases. Some 49 per cent of individual members now know how much they can expect to receive and Century says that the majority of schemes are now in surplus.

Many of the pensioners were in small, final salary company schemes which had been hit by the recession and were being wound up when Century Life took over the administrative nightmare in 1992-93. In 800 cases, there were no scheme trustees; so in August 1994 Century started the legal process of applying to the High Court for the appointment of an independent professional trustee to 547 schemes with some 7,800 members.

Over the past few years Century Life has made real progress in sorting out members' entitlements and this accelerated progress is expected to be acknowledged by the Pensions Ombudsman in his report due later this month. The progress was achieved by Century forming a steering committee consisting of the DTI, Contracted Out Employment Group (COEG), Occupational Pensions Board (OPB), Pensions Ombudsman's Office and Occupational Pensions Advisory Service (OPAS) to work together to resolve the problems encountered for the benefit of members. In the past, Dr Julian Farrand, the Ombudsman, has been critical of the Crown Life situation.

The problems that faced Century in its efforts to sort out the schemes and their benefits lay principally in the bureaucratic muddle bequeathed by Crown, a business which was better at marketing pension schemes than in handling the essential administration.

According to Century, the paper files and computer records passed over at the takeover were in a "poor state". Investment records for the schemes were incomplete and data on scheme members did not always reconcile with information held by the OPB and COEG, the regulatory bodies.

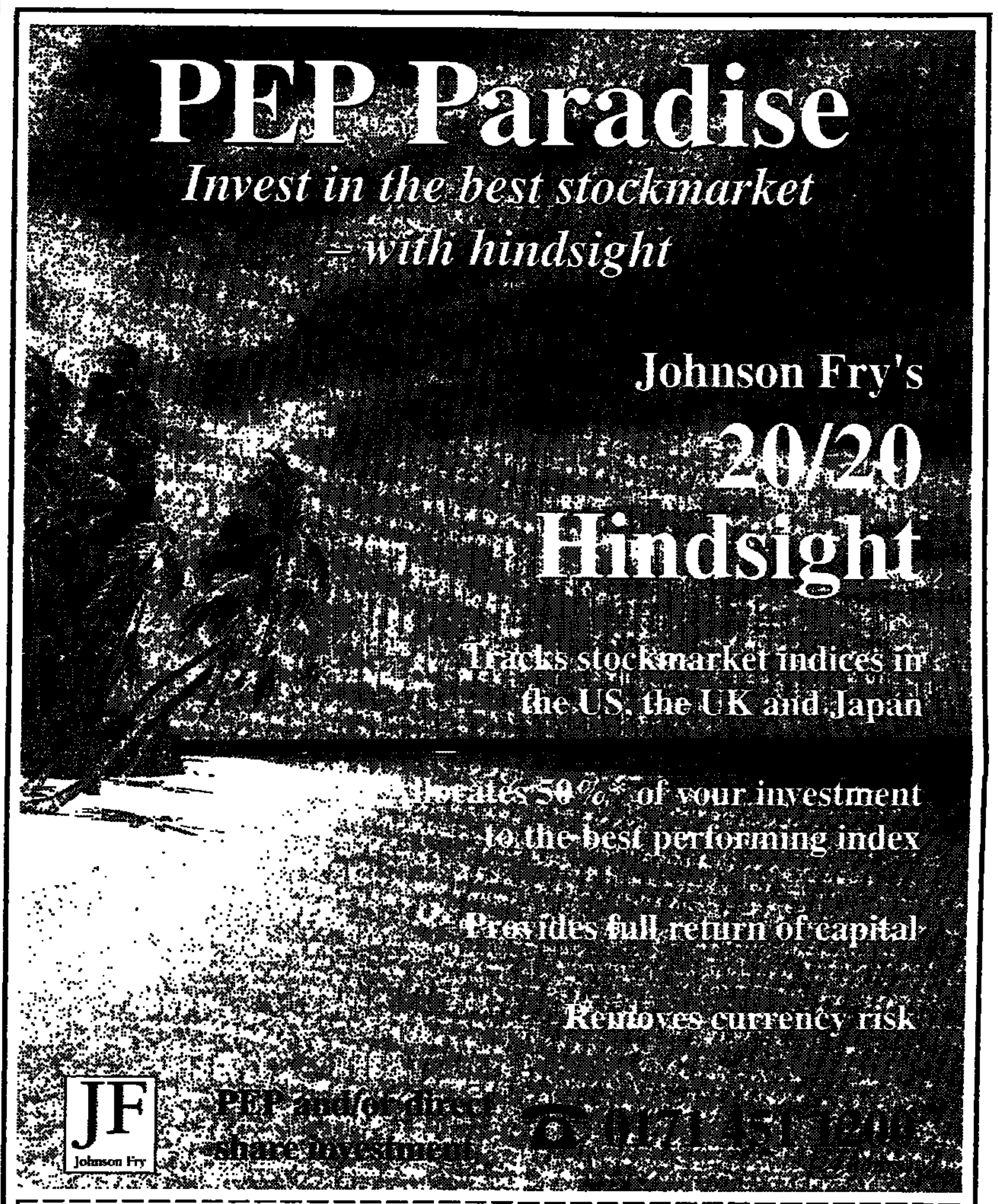
Century says that the schemes arrived with 11,500 items of outstanding post, 13 weeks' worth of mail. Information from 17 different computer systems had to be transferred on to a new single system. A special computer link was established to COEG.

Other problems were the result of the recession having driven many companies out of business. Around 90 per cent of the Crown Life schemes, covering 80,000 members, were in the process of being wound up when they passed into Century's control.

Many schemes did not have an effective trustee to take responsibility for communicating with members and representing their interests in the winding up. In the majority of cases, the employer had acted as sole trustee and was no longer on the scene. This left Century without the authority to settle benefits and led to the innovative court application for a corporate trustee, PAN Trustee Services Ltd, to be appointed.

Century will now apply to the new Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority to appoint independent trustees to a further 107 schemes. The winding up of the portfolio should be completed by the end of the year.

ANNE ASHWORTH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Sara McConnell explains why more homeowners are becoming landlords and how best to go about it

Renaissance in renting takes off

The rising housing market and more relaxed letting rules are tempting increasing numbers of homeowners to rent rather than sell their homes if they need to move for work or personal reasons.

The Small Landlords' Association (SLA) has seen queries from would-be landlords double as people realise they do not have to go through the expense and hassle of selling, particularly if they are moving temporarily and expect to return. If they rent, they will not only save on moving costs but they will be able to continue taking advantage of rising prices. House prices have risen by up to 11 per cent on average over the past year.

Changes in tenancy agreements earlier this year have also eliminated the risk of inadvertently signing over the property to a sitting tenant.

Gareth Hardwick, secretary of the SLA, says: "We have had substantial numbers of inquiries from people wishing to let for the first time."

Some may not need a property if they move jobs because there is a tied cottage which goes with the job. If the current occupant of Britain's most famous tied cottage, No 10 Downing Street, had rented his Islington home rather than putting the five-bedroom house on the market last month for £615,000, he could have expected a rental income of around £800 a week, according to Winkworth, the estate agent. The value of the house would also have continued to rise — not a small consideration in Islington, where prices have risen 25 per cent in the last two years.

But renting is by no means stress-free. Bad tenants, unscrupulous letting agents and problems with lenders have all been exposed in *The Times*, not least in the case of Helen Kara on this page. Here are some action points:

■ **Ask your lender.** Many landlords are tempted not to ask their lender's permission before renting because it involves extra administration and expense. But technically you are breaking your mortgage agreement if you rent without permission, and the lender would have the right to repossess.

A *Times* survey of major lenders revealed that charges for checking tenancy agreements and giving the go-ahead range from nothing at the Halifax to up to £102 at the Bradford & Bingley. The B&B claimed that it only rarely levied this charge in "complex cases" and that most people paid nearer the minimum charge of £35. Some lenders, including the Nationwide, Bristol & West and Britannia, charge an extra fee every time you get a new tenant. Others insist that you go through a lettings agent rather than advertising in your local paper.

Lenders have become more relaxed about renting, mainly because the rules governing tenancy agreements have improved (see below). But some, including the Birmingham Midshires, Bradford & Bingley and Bristol & West, add up to 1 per cent to your normal mortgage rate.

■ **Tell your insurers.** Your insurer can refuse to pay out on a claim if you have not told the company you are renting. You may face higher premiums, particularly on contents insurance, or you may have to find another insurer altogether. If you are a leaseholder, you must tell your freeholder, otherwise you may be in breach of your lease.

■ **Check your letting agreement.** You used to have to make sure you did not unwittingly sign an assured tenancy agreement, which effectively landed you with a sitting tenant. But since February this year all new agreements have had to be be assured shorthold tenancies, which allow you as landlord to get your tenants out after six months.

■ **Use a reputable agent.** If you use an agent, check that he or she is a member of the Association of Residential Letting Agents. Members have to have been trading for two years. They also have to have professional indemnity insurance. Client money and deposits have to be kept in a separate account from the general business account. Agents charge a commission of 10 per cent of your rent for introducing tenants and 15 per cent for managing property. If you are far from home this is the most sensible option.

Additional research by Penny Staniaszek.

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MIKE SCOTT

Bank has change of heart over tenancy refusal

A homeowner who has been battling with Lloyds Bank for nearly three months for permission to rent out her London flat finally won her fight this week, after the intervention of *The Times* (Sara McConnell writes).

Helen Kara, who has been unemployed for two years, applied for and got a part-time job in Staffordshire after the bank had told her she could rent out her flat in Peckham, southeast London. She could afford to take the job only if she could get rent to cover her mortgage. She made a point of checking this with the bank. "I played by the book," she said.

She found a tenant, sent Lloyds a copy of the tenancy agreement and signed off at the Department of Social Security. But just days before she was due to leave London, Lloyds told her she could not rent out her flat.

The bank argued that she was in arrears on her loan, although the same letter giving her permission to rent three months previously had also notified her of her arrears, which she had subsequently paid in full.

Ms Kara, now settled into a country cottage a world away from southeast London, had to move to Staffordshire as arranged, still liable for her London mortgage.

But after being contacted by *The Times*, Lloyds Bank agreed to allow her to rent out her London property, reviewing the arrangement after six months. It also promised to pay compensation covering this month's mortgage payment plus a sum for distress.

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Fixed-rate mortgages still available

Abbey National, Cheltenham & Gloucester and Northern Rock reacted quickly to this week's rise in interest rates. They all added the 0.25 per cent increase, bringing their rates to 8.2 per cent for borrowers with an average £50,000 mortgage. Other lenders, such as the Halifax, Woolwich and Nationwide Building Society, are reviewing their rates. However, the Nationwide did cut its discounts on the variable rate.

Paradoxically, the third increase imposed since the May is good news for borrowers seeking to fix their mortgage payments. The financial markets expect the Bank to raise interest rates from their new level up to 7.5 per cent this year, but believe rates will come down again in the second half of 1998 as the Bank reduces inflation. Ian Darby, marketing director at John Charcol, said: "Thursday's rise does not mean the wholesale withdrawal of fixed-rate mortgages. On the contrary, the rise does nothing to change the cost of long-term borrowing for lenders. However, it does change the sentiment of borrowers and there is likely to be more demand for these deals."

Nationwide has already proved the strength of this argument by cutting its five-year fixed mortgage to 7.59 per cent for new borrowers and 7.49 per cent for existing borrowers who are moving. However, this is still an unexceptional rate compared with other lenders. Abbey National's best rate is also 7.49 per cent and, unlike the Nationwide, it does not require borrowers to take out its buildings and contents insurance. Phillip Cartwright of London & Country Mortgages says Nationwide's existing two-year fixed rate of 6.49 per cent is better because it does not lock in borrowers beyond the two years and it refunds valuation and arrangement costs on completion.

If you are seeking to remortgage, Mr Cartwright says the big lenders will not give you as good a deal as they do to buyers. The best deals currently come from small building societies, such as Coventry, The Principality (in Wales) and Epsom-based National Counties. The latter has a two-year deal fixed at 7.39 per cent with a 1.75 per cent discount until August 1999. Compared with the average rate of 7.95 per cent, this represents a monthly saving of more than £100 for borrowers with a £60,000 mortgage.

GAVIN LUMSDEN

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نقلا عن الأصل

Bank has change of heart over tenancy refusal

Sara McConnell on a 12-year burden for borrowers who sold short

RICHARD LEE-HAIR

Lesley Mobbs was faced with a £200,000 building society demand despite being dependent on state benefits

Lenders' hard line on repossession debt

Borrowers whose homes were repossessed and sold at a shortfall during the recession will not be allowed to escape their debts, lenders gave warning this week.

Growing numbers of borrowers are being chased only now for repayment of debts incurred in the depths of the recession. Many were lulled into a false sense of security after hearing nothing for several years, and assumed that the debt had been written off.

But the Council of Mortgage Lenders says its members have up to 12 years to demand repayment and are within their rights to act. It argues that lenders only targeted people whose circumstances had improved since they were repossessed. "If a lender feels it is realistic to pursue a borrower for a shortfall they will. If a borrower's financial situation changes it would be reasonable to pursue them." The longer the delay in paying off the debt, the more expensive it will be as interest and charges continue to roll up.

Lenders have been known to use a number of methods to update themselves on the finances of former borrowers, including checking credit reference agency records and hiring private detectives. They deny that they chase people unless they know that they can pay.

In at least one case, however, a lender is demanding nearly £200,000 from a family living on state benefits. After a five-year silence, the Cheltenham & Gloucester, now the mortgage arm of Lloyds Bank, contacted Weekend Money readers Phil and Lesley Mobbs, asking them to pay back the shortfall incurred after their Warwickshire home was repossessed in April 1991.

C&G repossessed and sold the Mobbses' home after they fell nine months in arrears on their mortgage. The lender refused requests from Mr and Mrs Mobbs to allow them to sell it, and put it on the market at £450,000 in July 1991. It was sold in December for £300,000, leaving a shortfall of £150,000. This has grown to £197,000, including interest and costs.

The lender suggested to Mrs Mobbs that she pay off the debt at £500 a month. When Mrs Mobbs said she was on state benefits and could not afford to pay, C&G asked her parents to put up £50,000.

Shortly after *The Times* contacted the C&G on Mrs Mobbs's behalf, the lender suddenly withdrew its demands but made clear that it would continue to monitor her financial situation.

Mrs Mobbs says: "This means that the C&G are going to stalk us and any time we might be able to find decent jobs or buy a house, they will take the money".

C&G argues that it was trying to negotiate a "reasonable amount" in repayments from the Mobbses: "We are quite willing to negotiate." It freely admits it takes a hardline approach on arrears. "We are definitely active on arrears and try to get in before they become serious."

The National Association of Citizens' Advice Bureaux said it was unusual for lenders to target people on benefit. "Sometimes if people are on income support the lender will back off. But people know that if they get a job they will be chased again."

TAX RELIEF FOR THE OVER 60s. DON'T WORRY.

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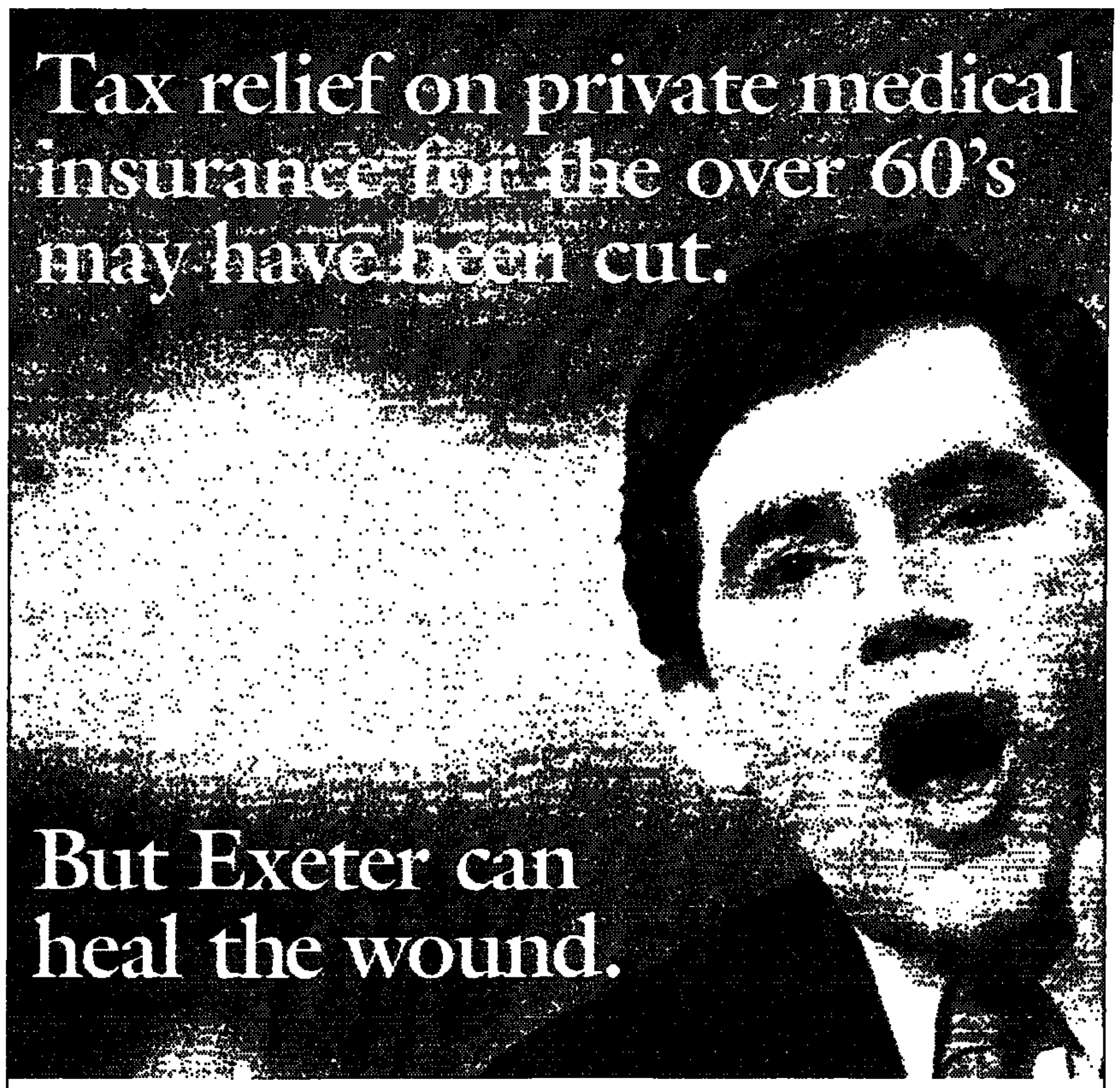
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75	£117.28	£248.14	£1570.32

Figures for joining age 50 are current rates. All other ages are based on current rates and assume a 4% annual subscription increase every year for both plans.

If you are under 80 years of age please telephone 01392 477210, fax 01392 477235 or complete this coupon for details

Mr/Mrs/Ms ____________________

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____________________ Postcode ____________________

Tel: Ages of people to be included ____________________

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TT 11/97

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THE TIMES MONEY INFORMATION SERVICE

Never too young to learn about cash

Children could benefit from a new book designed to help them to understand how to manage money. Published by Bloomsbury Children's Books, *Are Your Kids Cash Wise?* looks at potential moneyspinners from cooking to craftwork, dog walking to paper rounds and gives children ideas on quick, safe and effective ways to generate cash. The book also includes sections on fundraising and how to save and invest money. Available from bookshops priced £3.99.

■ LLOYDS BANK has increased its savings rates with immediate effect. The rate on its Instant Gold Savings Account has risen by 0.25 per cent to 4.50 per cent on the minimum balance of £2,500. Rates are tiered up to 5.30 per cent on balances of more than £50,000. Other new rates include a rise of 0.30 per cent on the Investment Account and an increase of 0.25 per cent on the 30 Day Savings Account. The interest rate on the Lloyds Bank Tessa is now 6.85 per cent.

■ HALIFAX is offering a free video entitled *Buying a Used Car with Confidence* as part of its car loans package. Halifax unsecured personal loans (£500 to £10,000) are available only to existing Halifax customers. To be eligible for a copy of the video, customers must successfully apply for a Halifax personal loan to purchase a car before August 30, 1997. Call Halifax Direct on 0800 184184 or ask at your local branch.

■ FROM Tuesday Abbey National will be increasing interest rates on its portfolio of savings accounts by up to 0.25 per cent. New rates on the Investor 30 account are now 3.60 per cent on balances of £1,000-plus, 3.85 per cent on £5,000-plus, 5.1 per cent on £25,000-plus and 5.5 per cent for £100,000-plus. For details of new rates on other accounts, contact your local branch.

■ *THE Micropal Guide to Offshore Investment Funds 1997-98* is now available. The 500-page guide is packed with performance statistics, fund facts and analysis of more than 5,500 offshore funds to March 31, 1997. It includes an in-depth review with charts of 350 of the top performers in the past year. The guide costs £85 plus postage. Telephone 01451 66759.

LIZANNE ROSE

SAVERS' BEST BUYS

INSTANT ACCESS ACCOUNTS	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Sainsbury's Bank 0500 405060	Inst Access	Instant	£1	6.15	Yly
Cheltenham & Glouc 0800 742437	Inst Transfer	Instantb	£1,000	6.50	Yly
Legal & General Bank 0500 111200	Direct Access	Postal	£2,500	6.70	Yly
Legal & General Bank 0500 111200	Direct Access	Postal	£10,000	7.00	Yly

NOTICE ACCOUNTS & BONDS	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Nottingham BS 0115 9564422	Postal Plus	30 day p	£5,000	6.95	Yly
Nottingham BS 0115 9564422	*Postal Plus*	*30 day p*	£10,000	7.05	Yly
Scarborough BS 01723 500616	Scarb 120 Day	120 day	£5,000	7.15	Yly
Coventry BS 0345 665522	Fixed Inc Bnd 2	31.8.00	£10,000	7.60	F/Yly

FIRST TESSAS (TAX FREE)	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest paid
Sun Banking Corp 01438 744505	Fxd+feeder a/c	5 year	£8,575	7.55	F/Yly
Investec Bank (UK) 0171 203 1650	Premier+feeder	5 year	£9,000	7.45	Yly
Principality BS 01222 344188		*5 year*	*£500*	*7.15*	Yly
Universal BS 0800 281496		5 year	£1,000	7.10	Yly

CREDIT CARDS BEST BUYS

CREDIT CARDS	Card type	Interest per month	APR%	Fee per annum
Capital One Bank 0800 669000	Visa	0.64%N	7.90%N	Nil
RBS Advanta 0800 077770	Visa	0.79%N	9.90%N	Nil
Co-operative Bank 0800 109000	Advantage Visa	0.87%C	10.90%	Nil

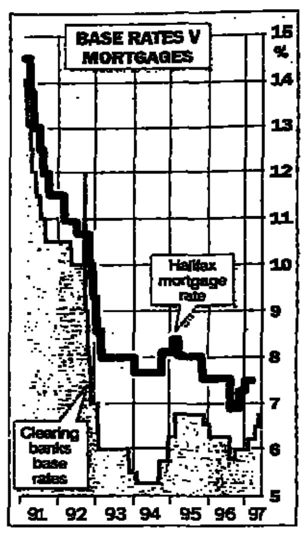
PERSONAL LOANS BEST BUYS

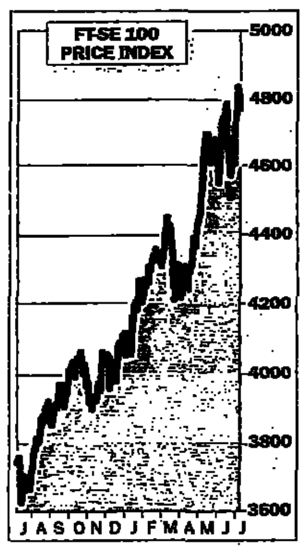
PERSONAL LOANS	APR	Monthly payment on £3,000 for 3yrs with insurance	no insurance
Northern Rock BS 0345 421421	12.90%H	£114.29	£102.59
Direct Line 0181 680 9966	13.90%A	£112.07	£101.33
RBS Direct 0800 121125	14.00%	£114.95	£101.45

Nb. A = Minimum age 22 years. Holders of comprehensive motor insurance policy or lender's existing customers, B = Withdrawals via Bank Clearing System, C = no interest free period, F = Fixed Rate (all other rates variable), H = Higher rate applies if insurance not arranged, N = Introductory rate for a limited period, P = By Post only

* RATES SHOWN ARE GROSS AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE
PLEASE CHECK RATES BEFORE INVESTING

Source: MoneyFacts, the Monthly Guide to Investment & Mortgage Rates (01692 500 677)





NATIONAL SAVINGS

	Gross rate	At tax rates 20%	40%	Min/maximum investmnt £	Notice	Contact
Ordinary A/c¹	1.50	1.20	0.90	10-10,000**		0645 645000
Investment A/c*ₑ	4.75	3.80	2.85	20-500***	1mth	0645 645000
Income Bond*ₑ	6.00	4.80	3.60	2,000-25,000**	3mth	0645 645000
First Opt Bondₖ	6.25	5.00	3.75	1,000-20,000**		0645 645000
44th Issue Cert†₂ₛ	5.35			100-10,000	8day	0645 645000
Children's Bond†	6.75			25-1,000	1mth	0645 645000
Gen Ext Rate	3.51					0645 645000
Capital Bondₛ ₑ	6.65	5.32	3.99	100-250,000	8day	0645 645000
10th Index Lnkd†ₛ	2.50			100-10,000	8day	0645 645000
Pensnrs Bond S3ₑ	7.00	5.60	4.20	500-50,000ₛ	60day	0645 645000

*¹ first £70 (£140 jt) of int tax free, inst accs for up to £100 ² Unlimited additional hldgs for reinvested proceeds †Tax free *Rates gross and vble ₛGuaranteed when held for 5 years ⁴0.2% net bonus for £20,000+ ⁵£100,000 if in addition to S1 and S2 holdings ⁶Taxable but cred in full ⁷£500-100,000 earn higher rates. **Tiered rates apply*

PENSION ANNUITIES

All figures are the gross annual annuity (£100,000 purchase), guaranteed 5 years, paid monthly in advance

SINGLE LIFE (level ann)	Male: Age 60	Age 65	Age 70
Generali ....Level	£ 9,551	£10,594	£11,952
Canada Life..........Level	£ 9,502	£10,587	£12,065
Standard Lf..........Level	£ 9,404	£10,496	£11,900
Norwich Un..........Level	£ 9,468	£10,476	£11,816
Equitable Lf..........Level	£ 9,534	£10,462	£11,675

SINGLE LIFE	Female: Age 60	Age 65	Age 70
Canada Life ....Level	£8,800	£ 9,614	£10,804
Generali ....Level	£8,656	£ 9,516	£10,704
Norwich Un ....Level	£8,750	£ 9,513	£10,664
Prudential ....Level	£8,643	£ 9,457	£10,649
Royal Sun All ....Level	£8,509	£ 9,365	£10,612

JOINT LIFE, 2/3 WIDOWS (level annuity)	Male: Age 60 Female: Age 55	Age 65 Age 60	Age 70 Age 65
Norwich Un ....Level	£8,567	£9,097	£ 9,761
Canada Life ....Level	£8,370	£8,994	£ 9,878
Generali ....Level	£8,325	£8,959	£ 9,829
Equitable Lf..........Level	£8,277	£8,813	£ 9,547
Allied Dunbar..........Level	£8,259	£8,803	£ 9,552

Source: Annuity Direct (0171 588 9393)

Statistics compiled by Lizanne Rose

GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS

ANNUAL INCOME

Rates as at July 10, 1997

	Investment (£)	Company	Standard Rate (%)
1 Year			
	5,000	GE Fin Assur	6.20
	10,000	AIG Life	6.26
	20,000	GE Fin Assur	6.45
	50,000	GE Fin Assur	6.55
2 Years			
	1,000	Hambro Assured	5.60
	5,000	GE Fin Assur	6.40
	20,000	GE Fin Assur	6.55
	50,000	GE Fin Assur	6.65
3 Years			
	1,000	Hambro Assured	5.70
	5,000	GE Fin Assur	6.48
	20,000	GE Fin Assur	6.58
	50,000	GE Fin Assur	6.68
4 Years			
	1,000	Hambro Assured	6.20
	3,000	ITT London & Ed	6.35
5 Years			
	1,000	Hambro Assured	6.05
	3,000	ITT London & Ed	6.60

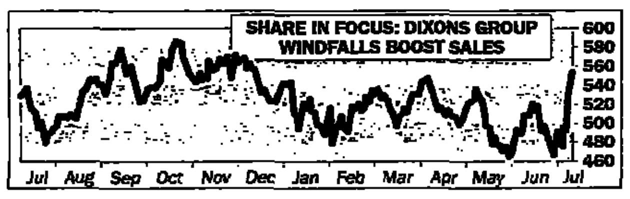
Source: Chamberlain de Broë 0171-434 4222. Net rates. Income and capital guaranteed. *Early surrender. Terms vary. Monthly income may be available.*

PIBS

FIXED RATE	Gross coupon	Buying price	% Gross yield	Issue price	Minimum purchase amount
Birmingham Midshires	9.375%	118.19	7.902	100.17	1,000
Bradford & Bingley	11.625%	141.77	8.200	100.13	10,000
Bradford & Bingley	13.000%	158.45	8.204	100.20	10,000
Bristol & West	13.375%	163.00	8.205	100.34	1,000
Britannia	13.000%	157.96	8.244	100.42	1,000
Coventry	12.125%	151.23	8.962	100.75	1,000
First National	11.750%	142.26	8.260	100.25	10,000
Leeds & Holbeck	13.375%	163.79	8.166	100.23	1,000
Newcastle	10.750%	131.29	8.155	100.32	1,000
Newcastle	12.625%	154.65	8.164	100.45	1,000
Northern Rock	12.625%	154.65	8.164	100.14	1,000
Skipton	12.875%	156.75	8.214	100.48	1,000

FLOATING RATE	Gross coupon	Buying price	Issue price	Minimum purchase
Cheshire (30/09-27/03)	9.04063%	114.00	100.00	1,000
First Nat(22/09-20/03)	9.12031%	104.00	100.00	1,000

PIBS = Permanent interest-bearing shares
Source ABN AMRO Hoare Govett — 0171 601 0101



LARGER LENDERS

Lender	Interest rate %	Loan size	Max %	Notes
Building Societies				
Bradford & Bingley 0800 570800	5.25	£15k+	85	2.10% discount for 2 years
Chelsea 0800 291291	4.85	£20k+	80	2.75% disc to 1.8.99
Northern Rock 0800 591500	4.99	to £250k	90	Fixed until 1.10.99
Banks				
Bank of Ireland 01189 510100	0.99	£20-145k	95	7.05% disc-6 mth 3% disc-6 mths
Royal Bank of Scot 0800 121121	4.95	£150-250k	90	3% discount to 2.3.98

LARGER LOANS

Lender	Interest rate %	Loan size	Max %	Notes
Building Societies				
Scarborough 0990 133149	0.95	£30-100k	95	6.99% dsc-6 mth 2%-6mth,0.5%-1y
Nottingham Imper. 0115 9817220	*0.75*	*£25-150k*	*75*	*Fixed at 0.75% to 31.1.98*
Staffordshire 0800 216121	1.49	to £200k	80	6% dsc-1.9.98, 2.90%dsc-1.9.99
Banks				
Bank of Ireland 01189 510100	0.99	£20-145k	95	7.05%dsc-6 mth 3% dsc-6 mth
Alliance & Leic 0800 412214	4.95	£30-150k	95	3% discount to 1.7.98

FIRST-TIME BUYERS

Lender	Interest rate %	Loan size	Max %	Notes
Building Societies				
Derbyshire 01332 841000	4.20	to £250k	95	3.15% discount for 1 year
Newbury 01635 43676	4.35	£15-100k	95	3% discount for 1 year
Mansfield 01246 202055	1.70	£25-250k	90	6% discount-6 mth Further dsc apply
Banks				
Bnk of Ireland 01189 510100	0.99	£20-145k	95	7.05% disc 6 mths 3% disc 6 mths
Halifax 01422 333333	4.95	no max	95	3%ds-10.99,0.5% over SVR-30.9.04

Larger lenders, loans and first-time buyers tables by Bay Guides Ltd (01753 880482)

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WEEKEND MONEY LETTERS

Why does Lloyds charge so much for tiny overdrafts?

From Dr P. Brooks

Sir, Today many banks pay interest to customers, some such as Sainsbury, pay nearly 6 per cent. Well-run banks such as Abbey National charge minimal interest on agreed overdrafts. Why does Lloyds refuse to treat customers well, in spite of its profits? I write on behalf of pensioners to draw attention to the large amounts Lloyds gets by overcharging on tiny overdrafts.

1) I have a £100 overdraft facility, yet Lloyds charges £8 the moment my overdraft rises above a mere £10. Midland does not, nor does Chelsea.

2) Statements are posted late, second class, so that one is prevented at times from promptly correcting an overdraft. Yet letters imposing charges are sent out the very same day, first class. Computers can do this, yet take three days to pay cheques in. Once again, the inefficiency gains Lloyds money.

3) My Lloyds manager knows full well that my pension arrives regularly at the end of every month, nearly £700. There is seldom an overdraft but if it occurs, Lloyds is prepared to waste its staff's time collecting the unjustified £8.

4) Almost every week Lloyds sends me expensive literature exhorting me to borrow. Then why treat a borrower so badly?

5) Lloyds will lose customers when they find that they can get lower charges from competitors. Once customers go, shareholders will earn lower dividends. Lloyds does not deserve to keep clients unless it shows more sense.

I hope you will publish this letter, so that readers on middle incomes, or pensions will learn that they can avoid charges. May I say how much I value you financial pages, and your advice.

Yours faithfully,
P. BROOKS,
Todmorden,
West Yorkshire.

Pence may not matter to you

From Ms M. Mendoza

Sir, I was gratified to receive my tax calculation report and to be informed that they were able to process my return "without any need for correction". As someone who last year was employed, unemployed and self-employed, among other complications, I found the number of forms that had to be completed, well, taxing.

It amused me though, having painstakingly followed the directions, including the request not to use pence, to receive a rebate totalling a number of pounds and 76p.

Go on Mr/Ms Taxperson, for just another 24p you could have a nice, neat round figure in your records.

Yours faithfully,
MICHELLE MENDOZA,
Magnolia, Dodds Lane,
Chalfont St Giles,
Buckinghamshire.

If you didn't count the pence I'd have lost a pound!
If you didn't count the pounds I'd have lost a stone
TAX
GED

Breach of faith over National Savings income bond returns

From Mrs P.C. Bloncourt

Sir, I suggest it is very unlikely that the marketing profile of the average holder of National Savings income bonds would much resemble that of the buyer of gilts. There are many more variables to consider when buying gilts.

I always assumed that my income bond returns moved up and down with base rates and have only just realised that, as Gavin Lumsden wrote (At the mercy of an IOU, Weekend Money, June 28), they don't.

There is a breach here of faith if not of required practice. I don't remember being informed about the change to a link with gilts.

Having awaited the Budget, I suggest there is little of comfort in it for the old and thrifty such as I, if they cannot find the time to read today's avalanche of "persuasive" mailshots and financial journalism.

And nor is there much for the more important young people of today.

Yours faithfully,
P. BLONCOURT,
16 Marlborough Crescent,
W4.

■ Letters to the Weekend Money section are welcomed, but *The Times* regrets that it cannot give individual replies or advice regarding investment matters.

No legal responsibility can be accepted for the advice or statements that are given in these columns and it must be emphasised that independent professional advice should always be sought over all investment matters.

Letters to the Weekend Money section of *The Times* can be sent by fax on 0171-782 5082.

I'm still with the Woolwich — just about

From Mr N. Richardson

Sir, Your article (Woolwich hiccup leaves Tessa-holders gasping, Weekend Money June 28) quoted the Woolwich as saying that they had a problem that ran into hundreds not thousands. According to their telephone query service they have a serious problem that is taking 16 days to resolve.

My wife and I both had Tessas that matured in January 1996. We went through all the necessary hoops including the inferior rates Woolwich paid in 1996 in order to qualify for shares in the flotation.

When, at the beginning of last week, we realised that we had not received the flotation package, I started to make inquiries. My local branch took my details on Tuesday but by Saturday the only information they could give, or were permitted to give, was that they had passed on my query to the "conversion office".

I also called the conversion office helpline who took my details as well. Checking with them today the reply I got was that "due to the magnitude of the problem I should not expect to receive any notification for about 16 days".

I believe they decided to convert in order to be able to develop new business opportunities. If their current performance is an indication of future trends, selling one's Woolwich shares as soon as possible might be the correct action. However, it seems that I, my wife and many others are not going to have that opportunity even though the Woolwich accepted our votes for the flotation.

Yours faithfully,
NIGEL RICHARDSON,
1 Griggs Orchard,
Sherington,
Newport Pagnell,
Buckinghamshire.

Who is indemnifying whom?

From Mr M.J. Oliver

Sir, Can someone please explain the apparent nonsense on letters of indemnity for lost share certificates?

On two recent occasions, I have not received the certificate for either bonus shares or rights issue shares and on each occasion a simple letter from me indemnifying the registrar against claims from the original turning up has been sufficient for a duplicate to be issued without charge. However, on two other occasions, both registrars required a fee from me, and an additional fee payable to my bank "for joining in the indemnity". On both these occasions the bank required me to sign a separate indemnity to them! Seems like a bit of a racket to me!

Yours faithfully,
M.J. OLIVER,
1 Well Close,
Ness,
South Wirral.

Travel insurance and the grey pilgrim

From Miss M.J.L. Jenner

Sir, I read your article on travel insurance with great interest as a friend aged 74 and I, 67, are using our *Times* Offer Eurostar tickets for a trip to Paris and I have been asking down the high street for insurance quotes, which ranged from £16.50 to a staggering £59 at Thomas Cook! Other forms of insurance acknowledge that elderly people are more careful of their possessions and prudent in their behaviour than their juniors. I think a campaign on behalf of grey pilgrims is overdue!

Yours faithfully,
M. JENNER,
173 Farnaby Road,
Bromley, Kent.

THE WEEK IN MONEY

Legal & General has become the latest life insurance company to set up a telephone bank offering savings products that have high interest rates. An instant-access account with rates of up to 7 per cent will be included in the product range.

☐ Providers of care homes in the UK face the prospect of stricter regulation after a decision by the Office of Fair Trading to investigate the £5 billion industry. The inquiry, scheduled for publication in spring 1998, will look at contracts between elderly people and their carers in 20,000 homes and financial protection for residents.

☐ Insurers have been asked by the Human Genetics Advisory Commission (HGAC) to give details of how they use genetic test results when assessing the life expectancy of clients. The two-month consultation will invite a broad range of opinion within the industry on how tests are interpreted when customers apply for endowments, mortgage protection policies and personal pensions.

☐ Helen Liddell, Economic Secretary, stepped up the Government's onslaught on the pensions industry on Wednesday when she attacked its 24 leading players for their "extremely disappointing" record in compensating victims of personal pensions mis-selling. She revealed that only 20,545 out of 432,393 people have accepted compensation from their pensions providers. Almost twice as many had been excluded from the review altogether.

☐ BZW defended its handling of the sale of Woolwich windfall shares on Thursday as the stock limped above 300p. More than 600,000 former members have watched anxiously as Woolwich's share price has slipped from a flotation high of 368½p on Monday to 295p two days later.

☐ Economists believe that another quarter-point rise could come as early as next month, with some forecasting that rates will rise as high as 8 per cent by early next year.

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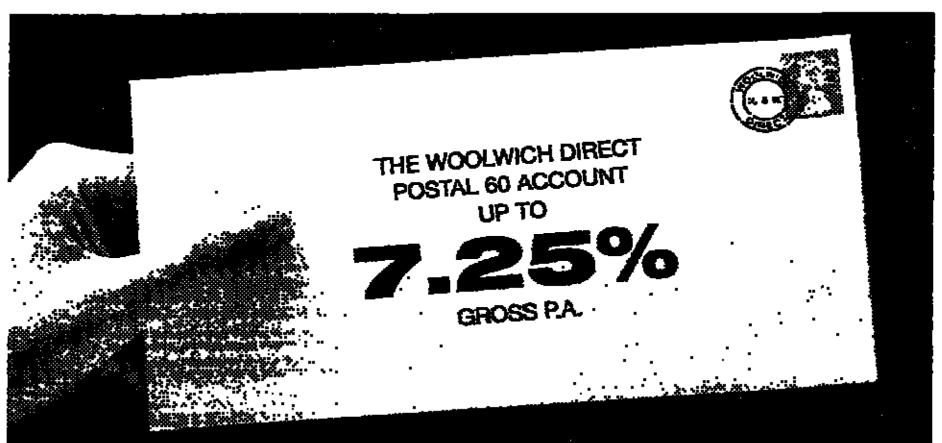

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PAD13

Shares enjoy strong finish

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
469	407½	Allied Domecq	448½	+12½	6.0	13.5
626	472½	Bulmer (HP)	475		3.6	14.1
75½	42½	Burn Stewart	44	..	9.7	11.0
1040	865	Glenmorangie A	872½		1.7	24.0
620½	425½	Grand Met	618½	+2½	3.3	19.6
620½	424	Guinness	618	+1½	3.3	17.6
380	321½	Highland Dist	331½		3.2	15.5
338	236	Matthew Clark	243½		12.3	11.6
109½	52½	Merydian W	70	-½	5.6	
1878½	1462½	SA Breweries	1806½		2.1	

BANKS

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
1178½	918½	ABN-AMRO	1093½	-16½	2.8	
971	710	Abbey Nat	855½	+4	3.6	15.1
655	532½	Alliance & Leic	621	+5½	3.3	15.2
504	398½	Allied Irish	497	-7	3.7	14.1
451½	363½	Aus New Z	449	-½	4.2	
4159½	2875	Bank America	3937½	-21½		
432	291½	Bank Scotland	410	-3	2.5	12.7
1303½	978½	Barclays	1216	-8	3.2	12.3
725	517½	Bk of Ireland	725	-8½	2.8	
7890½	6006½	Citicorp	7578½	+78½		
1759½	1368½	Commerzbk	1618½	-21½	2.8	
862½	559½	Dai Ichi Kan Y	728½	-3½	0.6	
3659½	2709½	Deutsche Bk	3525	-21½	1.7	
1131½	759½	Espirito Santo	1030½	-6½	3.2	..
947½	584½	Fuji Bank Y	802½	+11	0.6	
1973	1272½	HSBC	1961½	+22½	2.6	17.0
1884½	1241	HSBC HK	1874½	+21½	2.7	16.2
783	714	Halifax	761	-2	2.4	22.7
610	483½	Irish Perm	580		2.8	
705	424	Lloyds TSB	665	+1	2.5	21.5
888½	669½	Nat Aust Bk	874½	-4½	4.5	12.5
896½	663½	Nat West	868½	+19	4.2	13.0
663½	508	Royal Bk Scot	657½	-7½	4.0	13.1
1046	681	Stand Chart	973½	+16½	1.9	17.5
£164½	£164½	Wells Fargo	£164½		1.3	
374½	315½	Westpac	355	+1½	4.1	
373½	291½	Woolwich	359½	-4½	3.3	17.9

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MEDIA

PHARMACEUTICALS

PRINTING & PAPER

PROPERTY

RETAILERS, FOOD

RETAILERS, GENERAL

SUPPORT SERVICES

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
502½	391½	BT	440½	-37	5.8	12.9
594	456	Cable Wireless	572½	+11	2.4	21.2
338½	258½	Cable&Wire Cons	305½	+1	..	..
247½	167½	Euro Telecom	235		1.3	
200	136½	General Cable	154		..	
227	184½	Orange	205	+4		
338	274	Securicor	274½	-4	0.7	40.9
134½	61½	TeleWest	82	+½		
308½	240	Vodafone	295½	+½	2.0	26.9

TEXTILES & APPAREL

TRANSPORT

WATER

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
754	577½	Anglian	751½	+18	5.7	10.0
253	203	East Surrey	253		5.3	10.3
862½	740	Hyder	837½	+10	6.6	7.1
111½	101½	Hyder Cm Prf	104½	+½	9.4	
640	532½	Mid Kent Hldgs	575		6.5	
883	883	Severn Trent	864	+5	5.3	9.7
2920	2755	South Staffs	2800		3.9	12.7
792½	596½	South West	782	+11½	5.9	9.6
779½	593½	Thames	752	+3	5.7	8.8
739½	609½	Utd Utilities	721	+16½	6.4	12.1
468½	344½	Wessex	463½	-3	4.9	8.8
452½	325	Yorkshire	433	+3	5.3	9.2

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
115½	84½	Abacus Recruit	112½	-2	0.6	21.7
215	170	[illegible]	200	-8½	1.5	15.4
238	159½	Country Gdns	188½	-2	1.1	17.4
282½	180	Dawson Hldgs	207½	..	2.9	20.0
51½	38	Freepages	40			
99½	88½	Megalomedia	97½	..	0.3	..
37½	30½	Memory Corp	31½			
330	280	Prism Rail	330		..	..
1265	945	Ramco Egy	1080	..	0.1	..
782	619½	Southern News	744	-2½	3.1	24.1
72½	69½	Southern Vects	72½		3.3	15.0
510	410	Surrey Fr Inns	456½	-3½	0.7	31.6
60½	24	Trocadero	24½			

Source: FT Information

Price at suspension. † Ex dividend. ‡ Ex scrip. ▲ Ex rights issue. ♥ Ex all. § Ex capital distribution. * Figures or report awaited. .. No significant data. Companies in bold are constituents of the FTSE 100 Index.

BRITISH FUNDS

SHORTS (under 5 years)

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

LONGS (over 15 years)

UNDATED

INDEX-LINKED on projected inflation of: 10% 5%

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Shares enjoy strong finish

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75½	42½	Burn Stewart	44	...	9.7	11.0
1040	865	Glenmorangie A	972½		1.7	24.0
620½	425½	Grand Met	616½	+2½	3.3	19.6
620½	424	Guinness	616	+1½	3.3	17.8
380	321½	Highland Dist	331½		3.2	15.5
336	235	Matthew Clark	243½		12.3	11.6
109½	52½	Morgdwt W	78	−½	5.6	
1978½	1462½	SA Breweries	1806¼		2.1	

BANKS

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655	532½	Alliance & Leic	621	+5½	3.3	15.2
504	385½	Allied Irish	497	−7	3.7	14.1
451½	363½	ANZ New Z	445	+¼	4.2	
4158½	2875	Bank America	3937½	−21½		
432	291½	Bank Scotland	419	+3	2.5	12.7
1303½	978½	Barclays	1216	−8	3.2	12.3
725	517½	Bk of Ireland	725	+8½	2.8	
7890½	6008½	Citicorp	7578½	+78½		
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862½	559½	Dai Ichi Kan Y	728½	−3½	0.6	..
3658½	2709½	Deutsche Bk	3525	+21½	1.7	
1737½	758½	Espirito Santo	1090½	−8½	3.2	
947½	594½	Fuji Bank Y	802½	+11	0.8	
1973	1272½	HSBC	1961½	+22½	2.6	17.0
1884½	1241	HSBC HK	1874½	+21½	2.7	16.2
783	714	Halifax	761	−2	2.4	22.7
610	483½	Irish Perm	580		2.8	
705	424	Lloyds TSB	665	+1	2.5	21.5
898½	668½	Nat Aust Bk	874½	−4½	4.5	12.6
890½	663½	Nat West	868½	+19	4.2	13.0
663½	509	Ryl Bk Scotl	607½	−7½	4.0	13.1
1046	681	Stand Chart	978½	+16½	1.9	17.5
£164½	£164½	Wells Fargo	£164½		1.9	
374½	315½	Westpac	355	+1½	4.1	..
379½	291½	Woolwich	289½	−4½	3.3	17.8

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BRITISH FUNDS

SHORTS (under 5 years)

Stock	Int yld %	Gross red yld
Treas 7% 1997	7.00	6.75
Treas 8¾% 1997	8.73	6.62
Exch 15% 1997	14.62	6.63
Exch 9¾% 1998	9.61	6.87
Treas 7¼% 1998	7.24	6.95
Treas 14% 1998-01	13.25	6.99
Treas 15½% 1998	14.15	7.06
Exch 12% 1998	11.30	7.07
Treas 9½% 1999	9.19	7.12
Exch 12¼% 1999	11.34	7.13
Treas 10½% 1999	9.93	7.01
Treas 6% 1999	6.12	7.11
Conv 10¼% 1999	9.61	7.12
Conv 9% 2000	8.62	7.15
Treas 8% 2000	7.80	7.12
Treas 13% 2000	11.26	7.18
Treas 10% 2001	9.19	7.18
Treas 7% 2001	7.03	7.11

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

Stock	Int yld %	Gross red yld
Treas 9¾% 2002	8.79	7.16
Treas 8% 2003	7.68	7.11
Treas 10% 2003	8.78	7.15
Treas 11¾% 2001-04	10.12	7.20
Fund 3½% 1999-04	4.05	5.97
Conv 9½% 2004	8.38	7.10
Treas 6¾% 2004	6.87	7.05
Treas 8½% 2005	7.80	7.06
Conv 9½% 2005	8.32	7.08
Treas 12½% 2003-05	9.86	7.16
Treas 7½% 2006	7.28	7.04
Treas 7¾% 2006	7.42	7.07
Treas 8% 2002-06	7.76	7.24
Treas 11¾% 2003-07	9.75	7.18
Treas 8½% 2007	7.72	7.07
Treas 7¼% 2007	7.13	7.00
Treas 9% 2008	7.82	7.03
Treas 8% 2009	7.42	7.03

LONGS (over 15 years)

Stock	Int yld %	Gross red yld
Treas 6¼% 2010	6.70	7.04
Conv 9% 2011	7.67	7.02
Treas 9% 2012	7.62	7.04
Treas 5½% 2008-12	6.25	6.77
Treas 8% 2013	7.32	7.00
Treas 7¾% 2012-15	7.29	7.04
Treas 8% 2015	7.24	6.98
Treas 8¾% 2017	7.39	7.02
Tr 8% 2021	7.14	6.95

UNDATED

Stock	Int yld %
War Ln 3½%	7.03
Treas 2½%	7.22
Consols 4%	7.32

INDEX-LINKED on projected inflation of:

Stock	10%	5%
Treas IL 4⅝% 1998		3.03
Treas IL 2½% 2001	2.93	3.65
Treas IL 2½% 2003	3.17	3.64
Treas IL 4⅝% 2004	3.15	3.60
Treas IL 2% 2006	3.25	3.59
Treas IL 2½% 2009	3.29	3.56
Treas IL 2½% 2011	3.32	3.56
Treas IL 2½% 2013	3.35	3.56
Treas IL 2½% 2016	3.36	3.56
Treas IL 2½% 2020	3.41	3.58
Treas IL 2½% 2024	3.42	3.57
Treas IL 4⅛% 2030	3.41	3.57

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

1997 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
115½	84½	Abacus Recruit	112½	−2	0.6	21.7
215	170	Cafe Inns	200	8½	1.5	15.4
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262½	190	Dawson Hldgs	207½		2.9	20.0
51½	36	Freepages	40			
98½	90½	Megalomedia†	97½		0.3	
65	30½	Memory Corp	31½			
490	280	Pheon Rail	330			
1365	945	Ramco Egy	1080		0.1	
783	619½	Southern News	744	−2½	3.1	26.1
72½	65½	Southern Vectis	72½		3.3	15.6
510	410	Surrey Fr Inns	456½	−3½	0.7	31.6
60½	24	Trocadero†	24½			

Source: FT Information

Price at suspension. † Ex dividend. ‡ Ex scrip. ▲ Ex rights issue. ▼ Ex all. § Ex capital distribution. * Figures or report awaited. No significant data. Companies in bold are constituents of the FTSE 100 Index

RUGBY UNION

Rowell asks for one last stand

FROM DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT IN SYDNEY

ENGLAND will play the last international of the 1996-97 season — or is it the first international of a new season? — against Australia at the Sydney Football Stadium this evening in an atmosphere that is unique. At home, political decisions have been taken which could affect the team management, and thereby team personnel, while the players find themselves the filling in a tri-nations' sandwich.

At the same time, this is the first of a series, for which a magnificent cut-glass trophy — the Cook Cup — has been created, which will be played home and away for the next five years. England have never before enjoyed such continuity of fixtures with a southern-hemisphere nation, albeit one whom they have never beaten on Australian soil, and there will be no absence of motivation, on either side.

Over all hangs the shadow — for Australians, that is — of the last occasion when the two countries played: two years ago in Cape Town, England edged the holders out of the World Cup when Rob Andrew dropped the latest of goals to give his team success by 25-22, though of that team, only two players remain, Mike Catt (then at full back) and Tim Rodber. It would have been three but Tony Underwood withdrew yesterday because of a bruised hip and Nick Beal will win his second cap.

The Australians have six survivors but neither side relates back to Cape Town; so much has happened in rugby since, that two years ago almost constitutes ancient history. Both countries have modified their approach and Australia, under Greg Smith as coach, are feeling their way towards the benchmark set by New Zealand who beat them 30-13 in Christchurch last weekend. Smith, though he respects England's record, does not pretend to conceal that his principal task is the recovery of the Bledisloe Cup from the All Blacks.

England are buoyed by the belief that they are closer now to their potential 1999 World Cup squad than they have ever been, yet the scent of change hangs in the air like the gunsmoke that was left last night by the Rugby Football Union's annual meeting in London. Will the new national playing committee, which is likely to meet before the end of the month, renew Jack Rowell's contract as coach under the terms that he seeks and, if they do not, would a newcomer dispense with the services of Phil de Glanville as captain?

Rowell, rightly, believes he has achieved considerable restructuring during his 28 games at the helm and yesterday Smith, his opposite number, expressed surprise that he had not already been confirmed. "I think it's a disgrace," Smith said, suggesting that a successful coach should operate a four-year term up to and including a World Cup and then stand down. He also believes that the national coach should be home-bred. "Nationalism is a very powerful force," he said.

The coincidence of the visit to New Zealand this week by Don Rutherford, the RFU's director of rugby, has been taken by some to imply Rowell's demise, which has hardly been helpful in his preparations. Rutherford, who talks continually with influential coaches from overseas, met Graham Henry and Maurice Trapp in Auckland but said: "Assumptions that Henry might become the England coach are wildly off the mark. Because it is now a professional game, there may well be coaches involved with the national side in the next few years who are not English but imminent change is unlikely."

Were Rowell and De Glanville to come up with a win tonight, of course, their causes would not be harmed. That also is an unlikely, though not impossible, scenario if the 12 British Isles players involved can rediscover the aggression and unity that served them so well in South Africa, and Smith is not taking them lightly. "The England back row is a wonderful unit and we must make sure we acquire our ball," he said.

Tim Horan is confirmed in Smith's mind as the stand-off half who can take Australia forward to 1999, even though Horan established his reputation as a world-class centre.

Defeat for England will by no means be disastrous if they can demonstrate the fluidity of approach that characterised the Lions in South Africa and England in Argentina. "The main thing is that we continue to develop an English style and play with the confidence the team has shown in the past," De Glanville said.

Martin Johnson, the British Isles captain, may not be fit for the start of the new season after undergoing a groin operation that caused him to pull out of England's match today. Johnson has been told that the recovery time will be six weeks.

De Glanville, the England captain, enjoys a view of the Sydney Harbour Bridge and Opera House. Photograph: David Rogers / Allsport

TODAY'S TEAMS IN SYDNEY

AUSTRALIA		ENGLAND
M Burke (New South Wales)	15	T R G Stimpson (Newcastle)
B Tune (Queensland)	14	J Bentley (Newcastle)
J S Little (Queensland)	13	P R de Glanville (Bath)*
J Holbeck (ACT)	12	N J J Greenstock (Wasps)
J W Roff (ACT)	11	N D Beal (Northampton)
T J Horan (Queensland)	10	M J Catt (Bath)
G M Gregan (ACT)	9	M J S Dawson (Northampton)
C Blades (New South Wales)	1	G C Rowntree (Leicester)
M A Foley (Queensland)	2	M P Regan (Bristol)
E J A McKenzie (ACT)	3	D J Garforth (Leicester)
D T Manu (New South Wales)	6	L B N Dallaglio (Wasps)
G Morgan (Queensland)	4	N C Redman (Bath)
J A Eales (Queensland)*	5	S D Shaw (Wasps)
B J Robinson (ACT)	7	*R A Hill (Saracens)*
T Coker (ACT)	8	T A K Rodber (North'ton/Army)

Referee: P D O'Brien (New Zealand) Sky Sports 2: from 10.30 * captain

REPLACEMENTS: 16 S Larkham (ACT), 17 M Hardy (ACT), 18 S Payne (New South Wales), 19 D J Wilson (Queensland), 20 A Blades (New South Wales), 21 M Caputo (ACT).

REPLACEMENTS: 16 A S Healey (Leicester), 17 A D King (Wasps), 18 J M Sleightholme (Bath), 19 K Yates (Bath), 20 R Cockerill (Leicester), 21 B B Clarke (Richmond).

Wales give Buckett a second chance

IAN BUCKETT, the Swansea prop, was yesterday given the chance to resurrect his international career when he was named in the Wales side to play the American Eagles in San Francisco tonight.

The former Oxford Blue will win his second full cap — three years after playing against Tonga — because of an ankle injury to his club mate, Christian Loader. It is a twist of fortune for Buckett, who was well established as Swansea's leading loose-head prop before Loader graduated to the senior ranks.

Buckett, 29, severed the hamstring in his left leg in a scrum accident in a club game against Cardiff in 1995.

"I couldn't run for eight months," he said. "It has been a very frustrating few years and it has been difficult to get consistent first-team rugby since Christian got into the Welsh side. But I managed to get back into the Swansea side last season and now I intend to make the most of my second chance with Wales."

Buckett is one of three changes, all in the pack, from the Wales team that beat the United States 30-20 in the first international in Wilmington last weekend. The other two changes see Robin McBryde, the Llanelli hooker, replacing Garin Jenkins in the middle of the front row and Nathan Thomas, of Bath, coming in for Steve Williams, the Neath No 8, in the back row.

WALES: K Morgan (Pontypridd); W Proctor (Llanelli), L Davies (Cardiff), G Thomas (Bridgend), N Walker (Cardiff); A Thomas (Swansea), P John (Pontypridd); I Buckett (Swansea), R McBryde (Llanelli), L Mustoe (Cardiff), A Gibbs (Llanelli), G Llewellyn (Harlequins), M Voyle (Llanelli), N Thomas (Bath), G Jones (Cardiff, captain). Replacements: D James (Bridgend), L Jarvis (Cardiff), A Moore (Richmond), S Williams (Neath), C Anthony (Swansea), G Jenkins (Swansea)

LINGFIELD PARK

THUNDERER
2.20 Ninth Chord. 2.55 Herminius. 3.25 Ivory's Joy. 4.00 Star Talent. 4.35 Ivory Dawn. 5.05 Seattle Art.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM SIS
DRAW: 6F-7F, HIGH NUMBERS BEST

2.20 NATASHA GLYNNE MAIDEN STAKES
(£4,503: 1m 1f) (9 runners)

1 MAX'S MAGIC G L Moore 4-9-7 S Whitworth 3
2 VERSATILITY R Johnson Houghton 4-9-2 S Sanders 1
3 040- BICTON PARK 246 K Comerford 3-8-11 G Faulkner (5) 8
4 5 GLITTERING 12 C Brittain 3-8-11 B Doyle 6
5 02- LABEO 260 P Walwyn 3-8-11 R Hills 9
6 2- NINTH CHORD 246 J Gosden 3-8-11 Pat Eddery 7
7 ELAYSHA H Cecil 3-8-6 W Ryan 5
8 RUMUZ E Dunlop 3-8-6 J Reid 4
9 0 SUMMER THYME 24 J Berry 3-8-6 T E Durcan (5) 2

10-11 Elaysha, 3-1 Ninth Chord, 5-1 Labeo, 6-1 Rumuz, 25-1 Versatility, Glittering, 33-1 Summer Thyme, 50-1 others

2.55 E B F SURREY NOVICE STAKES
(2-Y-O: £4,854: 7f) (9)

1 431 OPPOSITION LEADER 18 (D,S) B Hills 9-2 D Holland 4
2 164 BALLET RAMBERT 15 (F) M Heaton-Ellis 8-13 R Ffrench (5) 7
3 44 HERMINIUS 16 J Dunlop 8-12 Pat Eddery 3
4 MAHBOOB D Morley 8-12 R Hills 2
5 MURMOON B Hanbury 8-12 W Ryan 1
6 TARASHAAN M Prescott 8-12 S Sanders 6
7 THREE ANGELS M Tompkins 8-12 D Biggs 9
8 WILDCAT R Hannon 8-12 J Reid 8
9 CERISETTE C Brittain 8-7 B Doyle 5

6-4 Herminius, 3-1 Opposition Leader, 7-1 Tarashaan, 8-1 Wildcat, 10-1 Ballet Rambert, Mahboob, 12-1 Murmoon, 20-1 others.

3.25 RUINART CHAMPAGNE NURSERY HANDICAP (2-Y-O: £5,900: 6f) (10)

1 001 BEN RINNES 19 (D,S) R Johnson Houghton 9-7 A Daly (5) 1
2 321 OH NEVER AGAIN 43 (D) M Johnston 9-4 D Holland 7
3 401 MASTER MAC 13 (S) R Akehurst 9-1 S Sanders 8
4 41 MAGIC RAINBOW 28 (S) M Bell 9-0 M Fenton 3
5 023 HOH JUSTICE 18 (BF) I Balding 8-12 S Whitworth 9
6 200 CAVERSFIELD 30 R Hannon 8-11 Pat Eddery 4
7 444 ELLEYSANTA 14 A Newcombe 8-9 J Reid 2
8 360 MAMORA BAY 31 M Tompkins 8-6 D Biggs 10
9 6121 IVORY'S JOY 15 (D,G,S) K Ivory 8-4 R Ffrench (5) 6
10 614 ISLAND GIRL 18 (D,G) D Arbuthnot 8-4 B Doyle 5

3-1 Ben Rinnes, 7-2 Master Mac, 6-1 Magic Rainbow, 7-1 Hoh Justice, 8-1 Oh Never Again, Island Girl, 10-1 Ivory's Joy, 12-1 others

4.00 DAILY MAIL CLASSIFIED SILVER TROPHY RATED HANDICAP (£12,590: 7f 140yd) (8)

1 -210 TREGARON 24 (F) R Akehurst 6-9-7 S Sanders 4
2 0033 CADEAUX TRYST 24 (D,F,G) E Dunlop 5-9-6 R Hills 5
3 4530 RUSSIAN MUSIC 23 (C,F) Gay Kelleway 4-9-4 R Ffrench 6
4 -265 TSARNISTA 34 (B,C,G) J Dunlop 4-8-11 W Ryan 2
5 -011 BRAVE KRIS 21 (F,S) L Cumani 3-8-9 Pat Eddery 3
6 5-30 MOONSHINE GIRL 23 (G) M Stoute 3-8-7 J Reid 1
7 6434 STAR TALENT 7 (D,F,G,S) I Balding 6-8-7 S Whitworth 7
8 5-60 DIVINA LUNA 14 (C,F,G) J Hills 4-8-7 D Holland 8

7-4 Brave Kris, 9-2 Tregaron, 5-1 Tsarnista, 6-1 Cadeaux Tryst, Star Talent, 12-1 Moonshine Girl, 14-1 Russian Music, 20-1 Divina Luna

4.35 ROTHMANS ROYALS NORTH SOUTH CHALLENGE SERIES HANDICAP
(3-Y-O: £7,700: 7f) (13)

1 6-00 REDWING 25 (D,G) J Dunlop 9-7 Pat Eddery 4
2 6503 PADDY LAD 19 (F) R Guest 9-3 P Bloomfield 2
3 14-6 HAKKANIYAH 9 (F) D Morley 9-2 R Hills 1
4 5026 NANT Y GAMER 15 (F) J Berry 8-13 T E Durcan (5) 6
5 5130 PRAEDITUS 25 (CD,G) R Hannon 8-11 J Reid 8
6 -124 GEE BEE DREAM 14 (CD,F) A Jarvis 8-11 W Ryan 9
7 12 PEPPIATT 17 (F) R Akehurst 8-11 S Sanders 5
8 2102 IVORY DAWN 15 (G) K Ivory 8-6 G Faulkner (5) 7
9 00-0 AEGEAN SOUND 86 (G) K Ivory 8-6 D Holland 11
10 0-16 EUROLINK PROFILE 22 (BF,D,F) L Cumani 8-5 R Ffrench (5) 12
11 0413 TOPATORI 17 (D,F) M Tompkins 8-4 D Biggs 10
12 -050 IMPULSIF 36 (D,G) D Ffrench Davis 8-2 M Fenton 13
13 0600 V I P CHARLIE 5 (BF) J Jenkins 7-12 A Daly (5) 3

11-4 Peppiatt, 5-1 Eurolink Profile, 6-1 Paddy Lad, 7-1 Gee Bee Dream, 10-1 Redwing, Topatori, 12-1 Ivory Dawn, 14-1 others

5.05 WHITES WEDDING MAIDEN STAKES
(£4,056: 1m 6f) (9)

1 0 AJCOMBE 14 Lady Herries 4-9-11 G Milligan (5) 7
2 ARCTIC TRIUMPH 13J M Bradstock 6-9-11 R Studholme (7) 2
3 ULTIMATE SMOOTHIE 56J M Pipe 5-9-11 Pat Eddery 9
4 BYHOOKORBYCROOK 172J K Comerford 5-9-6 G Faulkner (5) 4
5 HENBURY PRINCESS R Hodges 4-9-6 A Procter 3
6 000 COBLE 56 B Hills 3-8-10 D Holland 6
7 0-0 CRYSTAL HILLS 10 J Gosden 3-8-10 A Garth 8
8 0-22 SEATTLE ART 19 (BF) H Cecil 3-8-10 W Ryan 1
9 3-22 MELODICA 29 M Stoute 3-8-5 J Reid 5

5-6 Seattle Art, 9-4 Melodica, 10-1 Crystal Hills, 12-1 Ultimate Smoothie, 14-1 Coble, 25-1 Arctic Triumph, Henbury Princess, 33-1 others

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: J Gosden, 17 winners from 64 runners, 26.6%; H Cecil, 9 from 37, 24.3%; L Cumani, 6 from 25, 24.0%; M Prescott, 25 from 106, 23.6%; Lady Herries, 11 from 48, 22.9%

JOCKEYS: G Milligan, 6 winners from 22 rides, 27.3%; Pat Eddery, 17 from 70, 24.3%; D Holland, 47 from 198, 23.7%; R Hills, 13 from 72, 18.1%; W Ryan, 31 from 181, 17.1%

☐ **Polar Prince, trained by Michael Jarvis, and the supplemented Snow Kid (David Loder) tackle the group three Prix Messidor over a mile at Deauville tomorrow. Polar Prince was third to Alhaarth in the International Stakes at the Curragh last time out. Snow Kid has won his three starts by an aggregate of 14½ lengths.**

SOUTHWELL

THUNDERER
6.45 Santella Boy. 7.15 Andrelot. 7.45 Pingo Hill. 8.15 Iffeee. 8.45 Irie Mon. 9.15 Vision Of Freedom.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM SIS

6.45 LIME NOVICES CHASE
(£3,594: 3m 110yd) (11 runners)

1 1-12 SANTELLA BOY 24 (B,BF,D,F) C Mann 5-11-9 R Dunwoody
2 312- CALL ME ALBI 45 (B,F) Mrs L Richards 6-11-7 A P McCoy
3 U1-3 GIMME 21 (V,C,F,G) J O'Shea 7-11-7 Michael Brennan (3)
4 P/U- HAZLE WAND 101 T Bill 10-11-0 M Moloney
5 43/4 HOPE THATCH 13 T Thomson Jones 9-11-0 M A Fitzgerald
6 523/ JOHNS THE BOY 422 (D,G,S) N Mason 11-11-0 R Guest
7 30P- LITTLE TINCTURE 42 (D,F) Mrs T McInnes Skinner 7-11-0 G Upton
8 2R0- MINTULYAR 49 W Kemp 6-11-0 A S Smith
9 21-4 RAYMAN 21 (D,F) Miss K George 9-11-0 A Maguire
10 F1F- THE OXFORD DON 41P (D,F,G) N J Pomfret 9-11-0 J Culloty
11 P0-U ASTROLABE 24 J Bradley 5-10-9 R Johnson

13-8 Santella Boy, 4-1 Call Me Albi, 13-2 Johns The Boy, 7-1 Hope Thatch, 8-1 Gimme, Rayman, 14-1 Little Tincture, 16-1 others

7.15 ASH HANDICAP CHASE
(£4,198: 2m 4f 110yd) (8)

1 60-2 ANDRELOT 14 (C,D,F,G) P Bowen 10-12-0 A P McCoy
2 63-5 WHO'S TO SAY 13 (F,G,S) J O'Shea 11-11-11 Michael Brennan (3)
3 55-1 MAGGOTS GREEN 24 (CD,F,G,S) J Bradley 10-11-6 B Fenton
4 222- MILL O'THE RAGS 50 (BF,D,F,G) Mrs D Haine 8-11-6 J F Titley
5 35-P MERRY PANTO 35 (B,D,F,G) C Brooks 8-11-4 M Berry (7)
6 F15- WISE ADVICE 59 (D,F) M Hammond 7-11-1 A Maguire
7 12-1 SIGMA RUN 35 (C,F,G) J O'Shea 8-10-11 R Johnson
8 PP-6 NORTHERN OPTIMIST 24 (C,F,G) B Llewellyn 9-10-0 B Powell

11-4 Sigma Run, 3-1 Maggots Green, 7-2 Mill O'The Rags, 9-2 Andrelot, 6-1 Wise Advice, 12-1 Merry Panto, 14-1 Who's To Say, 25-1 Northern Optimist

7.45 SIDENOR (UK) HANDICAP HURDLE
(£2,839: 2m 4f 110yd) (10)

1 30F- OUT RANKING 64 (D,F,G,S) J Neville 5-12-0 J Culloty
2 53-1 MR MORIARTY 31 (F,S) S Bowring 6-11-7 T Dascombe (3)
3 65-0 NADJATI 24 (V,D,F,G) D Gandolfo 8-11-2 R Dunwoody
4 005- KIPPANOUR 141 (G) P Chamings 5-10-13 A Thornton
5 1-13 HELLO ME MAN 21 (BF,CD,F,G,S) B Llewellyn 9-10-10 Mr J L Llewellyn
6 2-02 DESERT FORCE 14 (B,C,F,S) G Fierro 8-10-8 A P McCoy
7 1-23 HACKETTS CROSS 13 (BF,D,F,G) P Eccles 9-10-7 A Maguire
8 F5-4 PINGO HILL 13 (D,G,S) J Mackie 5-10-6 T Eley
9 23-F BAYERD 14 (D,S) J O'Shea 6-10-3 Michael Brennan (3)
10 12-5 ZINGIBAR 24 (B,F,G,S) J Bradley 5-10-2 R Johnson

3-1 Mr Moriarty, 9-2 Desert Force, 6-1 Hello Me Man, 7-1 Out Ranking, Zingibar, 8-1 Hacketts Cross, Bayerd, 10-1 others

8.15 SYCAMORE NOVICES HURDLE
(£2,405: 3m 110yd) (9)

1 1-03 BULLENS BAY 14 (D,F,S) B Llewellyn 8-11-5 A P McCoy
2 60-2 CROCKNAMOHILL 24 K Bridgwater 6-10-12 M A Fitzgerald
3 35-1 IFFEEE 15 (D,F,G,S) P Bowen 10-10-12 R Johnson
4 62-2 IF ONLY 21 R Hollinshead 7-10-12 Gary Lyons
5 3-4 NORTH BEAR 29 G McCourt 5-10-12 D Fortt (3)
6 2-34 PROTOTYPE 15 (BF,F) G Johnson Houghton 6-10-12 A Thornton
7 PY SECOND CONTRACT 814 W Kemp 7-10-12 S McDougall
8 6P-4 PAGE ROYALE 14 C Mann 7-10-7 R Dunwoody
9 P-13 ESKIMO KISS 14 (C,S) J Mackie 4-10-3 T Eley

11-4 Iffeee, 9-2 Bullens Bay, 5-1 Page Royale, 6-1 If Only, 13-2 North Bear, Eskimo Kiss, 7-1 Prototype, 8-1 others

8.45 BOWMER & KIRKLAND SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,085: 2m) (13)

1 4-15 IRIE MON 21 (CD,F) M Bielby 5-12-0 R Dunwoody
2 0P-0 BLAZE OF OAK 24 J Bradley 6-11-10 B Fenton
3 55-6 BATTLESHIP BRUCE 12F (B) P Bowen 5-11-6 R Johnson
4 30-4 TANGO MAN 21 (D,F) J O'Shea 5-11-6 A P McCoy
5 U-30 NEVER SO BLUE 31 (D,F) P Bradley 6-11-5 M A Fitzgerald
6 40-8 CADDY'S FIRST 24 S Mellor 5-11-4 T J Murphy
7 04-S DR DAVE 24 P Chamings 6-11-3 A Thornton
8 54-2 FOLLOW DE CALL 13 D McCain 7-11-1 A Maguire
9 2-22 MASTER SHOWMAN 14 D Wintle 6-10-7 W Marston
10 33-5 TEE TEE TOO 14 A Carroll 5-10-7 R Studholme (7)
11 400- SMILEY FACE 164 G McCourt 5-10-5 -
12 00-6 GALLOPING GUNS 13 B Llewellyn 5-10-3 J Culloty
13 PP0- MORE BILLS 60 B Llewellyn 5-10-2 Mr S Durack (7)

4-1 Master Showman, 5-1 Irie Mon, Follow De Call, 11-2 Tango Man, 8-1 Battleship Bruce, 10-1 Caddy's First, Tee Tee Too, Smiley Face, 12-1 others.

9.15 CALVERTON PRACTICE LOOKS AFTER PEOPLE HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,311 3m 110yd) (6)

1 122- SCUD MISSILE 47 (F,G) J W Payne 6-11-13 A Thornton
2 -614 VISION OF FREEDOM 3 (F,G) P Bowen 9-11-6 L Cummins (5)
3 35-U SCOTONI 35 (F,S) R Babbage 11-11-6 A P McCoy
4 F0-0 JENNYELLEN 28 (F,G) P Bowen 8-11-5 R Johnson
5 21P- APACHEE FLOWER 42 (D,G,S) H Howe 7-11-1 M A Fitzgerald
6 03-4 BRIGHT SAPPHIRE 13 (D,F,G,S) P Butler 11-10-0 S Curran

11-10 Scud Missile, 11-4 Vision Of Freedom, 6-1 Apachee Flower, 7-1 Scotoni, 10-1 Jennyellen, 12-1 Bright Sapphire

COURSE SPECIALISTS

SOUTHWELL: Trainers: Mrs D Haine, 4 winners from 8 runners, 50.0%; J O'Shea, 12 from 39, 30.8%; B Llewellyn, 5 from 20, 25.0%; T Thomson Jones, 4 from 21, 19.0%; G McCourt, 3 from 16, 18.8%; M Hammond, 4 from 24, 16.7%. Jockeys: Michael Brennan, 8 winners from 22 rides, 36.4%; A Maguire, 17 from 49, 34.7%; Mr J L Llewellyn, 5 from 17, 29.4%; A P McCoy, 17 from 59, 28.8%; R Dunwoody, 14 from 53, 26.4%; B Fenton, 3 from 12, 25.0%

SALISBURY: Trainers: J Gosden, 12 winners from 46 runners, 26.1%; R J-Houghton, 4 from 22, 18.2%; E Dunlop, 3 from 17, 17.6%; R Charlton, 12 from 74, 16.2%; P Cole, 15 from 97, 15.5%; I Balding, 16 from 112, 14.3%; J Dunlop, 16 from 113, 14.2%. Jockeys: G Carter, 8 from 44, 18.2%; Dane O'Neill, 14 from 102, 13.7%; M Henry, 5 from 37, 13.5%; M J Dwyer, 3 from 30, 10.0%. Only qualifiers.

Blinkered first time

CHESTER: 2.10 Narrogin. 3.15 Vax Star. LINGFIELD PARK: 4.00 Tsarnista. SALISBURY: 3.20 Mystery Hill. 5.00 Sharp 'N Smart. SOUTHWELL: 7.15 Merry Panto. 7.45 Zingibar. WARWICK: 8.00 Forzara. YORK: 4.45 Malia. 5.15 Hirst Bridge

CHESTER

THUNDERER
2.10 Lord Of Love. 2.45 Rex Mundi. 3.15 Bishops Court. 3.50 Just Another Time. 4.25 Islamabad. 4.55 Mad Militant.

The Times Private Handicapper's top rating: 4.25 ISLAMABAD.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM SIS
DRAW: 5F-7F, LOW NUMBERS BEST

2.10 BROXTON NURSERY HANDICAP
(2-Y-O: £3,761: 7f 2yd) (10 runners)

1 (9) 2204 OUT LIKE MAGIC 12 (F) P Evans 9-7 J F Egan 97
2 (10) 460 NARROGIN 36 (V) M Channon 9-1 J Fortune 89
3 (8) 504 RED MAPLE 28 P Cole 9-1 F Norton 90
4 (1) 5111 LORD SMITH 8 (D,F,G,S) M Pipe 9-1 P Fessey (3) 90
5 (6) 0054 LORD OF LOVE 7 T Easterby 8-11 D McKeown 94
6 (4) 3311 FAST FRANC 11 (S) S C Williams 8-9 D Williams (7) 92
7 (3) 0512 ARM AND A LEG 32 (BF,F) C Dwyer 8-6 R Mullen (5) 97
8 (2) 0402 FLAME TOWER 2 R Hannon 8-5 Paul Eddery [illegible]
9 (5) 030 GRALMANO 18 N Littmoden 8-1 Dale Gibson 98
10 (7) 1203 EDNA'S GIFT 11 (BF,F) J Berry 7-11 P Bradley (7) 98

4-1 Fast Franc, 5-1 Lord Smith, 6-1 Flame Tower, 7-1 Red Maple, 10-1 others

2.45 CHESTER SUMMER HANDICAP
(£5,833: 2m) (11)

1 (5) 6110 DANCING CAVALIER 14 (F,G,S) R Hollinshead 4-9-10 P Fredericks (7) 93
2 (7) 6606 WARNING REEF 16 P Eccles 4-9-7 R Hughes [illegible]
3 (4) -032 REX MUNDI 8 (BF,F) P Evans 5-9-2 J F Egan 91
4 (6) 1112 RAMIKE 7 (F,S) M Johnston 3-9-2 D McKeown 90
5 (3) 2413 HERE COMES HERBIE 57 (BF,D,G,S) W Storey 5-9-0 P Fessey (3) 93
6 (8) 1530 GREAT ORATION 25 (CD,F) F Watson 8-9-0 J Fortune 95
7 (1) 3212 TRILBY 12 (V,BF,D,F,S) G Richards 4-8-13 P Roberts (5) 96
8 (11) 3106 NORTHERN MOTTO 15 (F,S) J Goldie 4-8-8 N Varley 95
9 (9) -303 GENERAL MOUKTAR 11 (F,G) M Pipe 7-8-7 Paul Eddery 97
10 (10) 211- BOLD ELECT 376 (F,G,S) E Alston 9-8-7 D Griffiths (3) 88
11 (2) -040 EUPHORIC ILLUSION 17 (BF) Mrs S Smith 6-7-11 D Gibson 94

9-2 Ramike, 5-1 Trilby, 11-2 Here Comes Herbie, 6-1 Rex Mundi, 7-1 General Mouktar, 8-1 Dancing Cavalier, Bold Elect, 10-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: D Loder, 4 winners from 14 runners, 28.6%; Mrs J Ramsden, 5 from 18, 27.8%; M Pipe, 6 from 22, 27.3%; R Hannon, 13 from 70, 18.6%; G Lewis, 3 from 18, 16.7%; P Cole, 8 from 50, 16.0%.

JOCKEYS: R Hughes, 3 winners from 15 rides, 20.0%; J Egan, 4 from 22, 18.2%; Paul Eddery, 9 from 50, 18.0%. Only qualifiers.

3.15 CITY WALL CONDITIONS STAKES
(£15,535: 5f 16yd) (9)

1 (5) 5101 YA MALAK 7 (CD,F,G,S) D Nicholls 6-9-8 Alex Greaves 96
2 (2) 3300 BOLSHOI 7 (B,D,F,G) J Berry 5-9-2 Emma O'Gorman 91
3 (6) 4004 KING OF PERU 14 (F,G,S) N Littmoden 4-9-0 T G McLaughlin 82
4 (7) 0-62 STRUGGLER 7 (BF,D,F,G) D Loder 5-9-0 R Hughes [illegible]
5 (1) 1106 TEDBURROW 7 (D,F,S) E Alston 5-9-0 D Griffiths 92
6 (8) 4466 ZIGGY'S DANCER 7 (CD,F,G) E Alston 6-9-0 J F Egan 86
7 (4) 1332 BISHOPS COURT 21 (BF,C,D,G,S) Mrs J Ramsden 3-8-9 J Fortune 96
8 (9) 5-35 BLUE IRIS 35 (BF,D,F,G) M Jarvis 4-8-9 Paul Eddery 89
9 (3) 0-00 VAX STAR 28 (B,D,G) J Spearing 3-8-4 Dean McKeown 83

3-1 Struggler, 7-2 Ya Malak, Bishops Court, 7-1 Blue Iris, 8-1 Bolshoi, 10-1 King Of Peru, Tedburrow, 16-1 others.

3.50 E B F MAIDEN STAKES
(2-Y-O: £4,224: 5f 16yd) (6)

1 (4) 34 HUNTSWOOD 26 (BF) R Hannon 9-0 R Hughes [illegible]
2 (5) 34 JUST ANOTHER TIME 24 J Berry 9-0 P Roberts (5) 86
3 (2) 302 TAKE A TURN 8 M Channon 9-0 J Fortune 90
4 (3) 05 BLARNEY PARK 23 C Dwyer 8-9 N Varley –
5 (1) FARNDON PRINCESS R Hollinshead 8-9 Paul Eddery –
6 (6) TIME TO TIME T Easterby 8-9 D McKeown –

2-1 Huntswood, 11-4 Just Another Time, 7-2 Take A Turn, 6-1 Time To Time, 8-1 Blarney Park, 14-1 Farndon Princess

4.25 WATERGATE STREET GALLERY CONDITIONS STAKES (2-Y-O: £5,170: 6f 18yd) (6)

1 (6) 031 DEECEEBEE 14 (D,S) W Storey 9-1 P Fessey (3) 84
2 (3) 21 ISLAMABAD 28 (F) G Lewis 9-1 Paul Eddery [illegible]
3 (2) 31 JIMMY TOO 17 (C,S) B McMahon 9-1 J Fortune 82
4 (5) 001 MARTON MOSS 12 (S) T Easterby 9-1 D McKeown 78
5 (1) 05 SOMOSIERRA 86 J Berry 8-11 P Roberts (5) 69
6 (4) 1603 HEAVENLY ABSTONE 7 (V,BF,F,S) P Evans 8-10 J F Egan 88

6-4 Islamabad, 4-1 Marton Moss, 5-1 Somosierra, 11-2 Deeceebee, 7-1 Jimmy Too, Heavenly Abstone

4.55 CHESHIRE YEOMANRY HANDICAP
(£4,250: 1m 2f 75yd) (7)

1 (2) 4005 GYMCRAK PREMIERE 15 (V,D,F,G,S) G Holmes 9-9-10 J Fortune [illegible]
2 (4) 0051 BRANDON JACK 15 (F,S) I Balding 3-9-2 Paul Eddery 95
3 (6) 1510 MAD MILITANT 25 (C,F,G,S) A Streeter 8-9-1 R Havlin (3) 94
4 (1) 0441 TONNERRE 19 (D,S) B McMahon 5-8-11 S Righton (7) 97
5 (7) 5132 AMBIDEXTROUS 7 (F,G) E Alston 5-8-10 J F Egan 98
6 (5) 4450 KEEP BATTLING 15 (D,F,G) J Goldie 7-7-12 P Fessey (3) 92
7 (3) 30/0 GOLDEN FISH 21 E Alston 5-7-10 P Bradley (7) –

2-1 Brandon Jack, 4-1 Ambidextrous, 9-2 Tonnerre, 11-2 Mad Militant, 13-2 Ambidextrous, 10-1 others.

SALISBURY

THUNDERER
2.15 Royal Bounty. 2.50 Mighty Phantom. 3.20 Dulcinea. 3.55 Chris's Lad. 4.30 PARISIAN LADY (nap). 5.00 Meranti. 5.30 After The Rain.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM SIS
DRAW. 6F-7F, HIGH NUMBERS BEST

2.15 EBF QUEENPOT MAIDEN STAKES
(Div I: 2-Y-O: £3,405: 6f 212yd) (15 runners)

1 34 AL'S FELLA 14 P Cole 9-0 R Perham 5
2 526 ANVIL 23 G Lewis 9-0 W J O'Connor 1
3 BALACLAVA E Dunlop 9-0 D O'Donohoe (3) 7
4 CAGE AUX FOLLES J Hills 9-0 M Henry (3) 8
5 CHATTAN B Hills 9-0 J D Smith (3) 6
6 CLOSE UP J Dunlop 9-0 G Hind 3
7 5 DARING NEWS 16 R Hannon 9-0 Dane O'Neill 14
8 FAKHR J Dunlop 9-0 G Carter 9
9 MINJARA A P Jones 9-0 A McGlone 2
10 0 SANTONE 45 R Hannon 9-0 Martin Dwyer (3) 10
11 ZURVAF B Meehan 9-0 M Tebbutt 13
12 04 FLORAL PARK 8 G Balding 8-9 S Drowne 4
13 0005 MAGICAL DANCER 28 Mrs P Dutfield 8-9 Aimee Cook (5) 11
14 6 ROYAL BOUNTY 29 W Hern 8-9 T Sprake 12
15 0 THUNDERING PAPOOSE 39 A James 8-9 P P Murphy (3) 15

7-2 Anvil, 4-1 Fakhr, Al's Fella, 7-1 Daring News, Royal Bounty, 10-1 others.

2.50 FELSTEAD LIMITED STAKES
(£2,616 1m 6f) (6)

1 1360 ALARICO 17 I Williams 4-9-8 T Sprake 1
2 4014 CHARNWOOD JACK 10 (D,F) I Campbell 4-9-8 S Drowne 6
3 3525 PRINCE DANZIG 39 (BF,F) D Murray Smith 6-9-6 Dane O'Neill 4
4 3203 TAWAFEK 8 S Dow 4-9-6 R Perham 5
5 -000 WESTERN PLAYBOY 14 R Baker 5-9-6 V Slattery 3
6 -053 MIGHTY PHANTOM 30 (F) J Hills 4-9-3 M Henry (3) 2

13-8 Mighty Phantom, 3-1 Charnwood Jack, 4-1 Prince Danzig, 9-2 others

3.20 GIBBS MEW HANDICAP
(3-Y-O: £4,796: 1m) (13)

1 03-0 HEART FULL OF SOUL 56 (B,D,F) P Cole 9-7 D Sweeney (5) 3
2 5252 WILD SKY 35 M Heaton-Ellis 9-7 S Drowne 7
3 1033 SWORD ARM 85 (D) R Charlton 9-5 T Sprake 2
4 -400 BEGORRAT 61 B Meehan 9-4 M Tebbutt 9
5 0056 MYSTERY HILL 19 (V) J Gosden 9-4 G Hind 1
6 404- TRIPLE TERM 260 J G Smyth-Osbourne 9-3 W J O'Connor 8
7 8-03 OLIVO 30 C Horgan 9-0 A McGlone 6
8 3255 ABAJANY 54 (BF) M Channon 8-10 P P Murphy (3) 11
9 0625 SAND CAY 17 R Hannon 8-8 D O'Donohoe (3) 10
10 0260 WARRING 21 M Saunders 8-6 M Henry (3) 5
11 -081 DULCINEA 17 (C,S) I Balding 8-4 Martin Dwyer (3) 12
12 4340 INTERDREAM 28 (F) R Hannon 8-4 Dane O'Neill 13
13 -005 ISCA MAIDEN 19 P Hayward 7-10 R Brisland (7) 4

4-1 Dulcinea, 6-1 Olivo, Sword Arm, 7-1 Wild Sky, Mystery Hill, 8-1 others

3.55 CRESTED LARK AMATEUR RIDERS HANDICAP (£2,952: 1m 4f) (15)

1 -110 RISING SPRAY 45 (BF,C,D,F) C Horgan 6-11-7 R Thornton 1
2 2431 SEA FREEDOM 25 (V,F,S) G Balding 6-11-5 L Jefford 10
3 0623 PAY HOMAGE 8 (F,G) I Balding 9-11-3 A Balding 12
4 0263 STATAJACK 10 (B,D,F,G,S) D Elsworth 9-10-13 N Moran (5) 5
5 3010 NOSEY NATIVE 8 (BF,D,F,S) J Pearce 4-10-12 Mrs L Pearce 14
6 2080 NIKITA'S STAR 58 (D,F) D Murray Smith 4-10-12 T McCarthy 8
7 0/00 CREDIT SQUEEZE 18 R J-Houghton 7-10-9 Miss E J-Houghton 9
8 0214 SUN OF SPRING 8 (D,F,G,S) D Chapman 7-10-8 Miss R Clark 4
9 0100 CHRIS'S LAD 7 (B,C,D,F,G,S) B Meehan 6-10-8 Miss J Allison 15
10 2656 FABULOUS MTOTO 5 (D,F,G) M Saunders 7-10-8 K Goble 3
11 0004 FOURDANED 10 S Dow 4-10-6 T Cuff 2
12 4000 STONECUTTER 21 P Makin 4-9-13 Miss S Deboriatle (5) 13
13 0023 COURAGEOUS KNIGHT 17 (F) P Hayward 8-9-9 Mrs S Bosley 11
14 0460 ROYAL ACCLAIM 120 (C,F) K Burke 12-9-0 Miss R J Patman (5) 6
15 0-50 BURNING COST 21 R Peacock 7-9-0 Mrs C Peacock (5) 7

3-1 Sea Freedom, 13-2 Nosey Native, 7-1 Fourdaned, 8-1 Pay Homage, Statajack, Courageous Knight, 10-1 Rising Spray, 12-1 others

4.30 MYROBELLA NOVICE AUCTION STAKES
(2-Y-O: £2,847: 6f) (10)

1 0221 PHONE ALEX 21 (G) R Hannon 8-13 Dane O'Neill 2
2 6113 WHO NOSE 16 (B,D,F,G) B Meehan 8-13 M Tebbutt 6
3 15 BLUSHING VICTORIA 74 (F) M Meade 8-12 R Brisland (7) 8
4 44 ELEVENTH DUKE 33 (BF) R Hannon 8-12 W J O'Connor 7
5 01 SILVER STRAND 7 (D,S) B Hills 8-10 J D Smith (3) 10
6 210 TAMERIN BAY 16 (F) R Boss 8-10 T Sprake 4
7 0000 OISIN 18 Mrs P Dutfield 8-9 D Sweeney (5) 9
8 1 PARISIAN LADY 32 (CD,F) A Newcombe 8-5 G Hind 3
9 0060 AFTER DAWN 10 Mrs P Dutfield 8-4 Aimee Cook (5) 5
10 3 ROBEENA 7 C Allen 8-4 Martin Dwyer (3) 1

11-4 Phone Alex, 7-2 Silver Strand, 5-1 Robeena, 6-1 Tamerin Bay, 7-1 Eleventh Duke, 8-1 Parisian Lady, 12-1 Blushing Victoria, 14-1 others.

5.00 OWEN TUDOR HANDICAP (£3,210: 6f) (16)

1 5020 FRIENDLY BRAVE 3 (BF,D,F,S) Gay Kelleway 7-9-11 W J O'Connor 16
2 1600 SHARP 'N SMART 42 (B,D,F,G) B Smart 5-9-10 M Tebbutt 10
3 4655 WHITE SETTLER 15 (F) R Hodges 4-9-8 Martin Dwyer (3) 9
4 0224 CAUDILLO 9 (BF,S) Mrs P Dutfield 4-9-7 D McGaffin (7) 4
5 -200 MR SPEAKER 28 (D,F) C Wall 4-9-6 G Hind 1
6 6555 ERUPT 13 (D,S) G Balding 4-9-6 A McGlone 12
7 0022 FAIRY PRINCE 26 (D,F) Mrs A King 4-9-6 M Henry (3) 7
8 5000 SCISSOR RIDGE 7 (D,F) J Bridger 5-9-6 P Doe (7) 15
9 0006 SOVEREIGNS COURT 17 L Cottrell 4-9-3 J D Smith (3) 5
10 1053 SIZZLING 19 (D,F) R Hannon 5-9-2 Dane O'Neill 13
11 5062 POINTER 17 (CD,F,S) Mrs P Dutfield 5-9-2 Aimee Cook (5) 11
12 0-06 PRIDE OF HAYLING 26 (D,F) P Hedger 6-9-1 S Drowne 14
13 6000 ROBELLION 17 (V,D,F) D Arbuthnot 6-9-1 D Sweeney (5) 3
14 0602 MERANTI 28 (BF,D,F,G) J Bradley 4-9-1 T Sprake 2
15 2000 MELLORS 64 (D,G) M Heaton-Ellis 4-9-0 J Fowle (7) 6
16 6610 ROCKCRACKER 26 (D,F) G Margarson 5-9-0 G Carter 8

6-1 Friendly Brave, 7-1 Fairy Prince, 8-1 Sovereigns Court, Sizzling, Pointer, Meranti, 10-1 Caudillo, Scissor Ridge, 12-1 others

5.30 EBF QUEENPOT MAIDEN STAKES
(Div II: 2-Y-O: £3,405: 6f 212yd) (14)

1 6 AFTER THE RAIN 58 B Hills 9-0 J D Smith (3) 4
2 BENEVENTUS W Hern 9-0 T Sprake 12
3 DESERT ARROW S bin Suroor 9-0 A McGlone 10
4 5 DOCKSIDER 22 J Hills 9-0 M Henry (3) 8
5 GREEN JACKET J Dunlop 9-0 G Carter 9
6 0 LAFFAH 14 J Gosden 9-0 G Hind 11
7 LEAR SPEAR D Elsworth 9-0 W J O'Connor 14
8 LIFT THE OFFER R Hannon 9-0 Dane O'Neill 3
9 65 NAKED OAT 13 B Smart 9-0 M Tebbutt 6
10 NIGHT SHOT I Balding 9-0 Martin Dwyer (3) 5
11 5 CHAYANEE'S ARENA 24 A Newcombe 8-9 P P Murphy (3) 7
12 0 KATE LANE 32 Mrs P Dutfield 8-9 Aimee Cook (5) 13
13 06 PHANTOM WATERS 29 R Johnson Houghton 8-9 D O'Donohoe (3) 1
14 0 SHALABELLA 78 M Channon 8-9 Candy Morris 2

11-4 Desert Arrow, 5-1 Laffah, 6-1 After The Rain, 7-1 Green Jacket, 8-1 Docksider, Night Shot, 12-1 Beneventus, Lift The Offer, 14-1 others.

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

York

Going: good (good to firm in places)

2.10 (5f) 1, DASHING BLUE (L Dettori, 8-1); 2, *Crofters Ceilidh (J Reid, 14-1)*; 3, Twice As Sharp (C Lowther, 7-1). ALSO RAN: 5-1 fav Crowded Avenue, 7 Sea-Deer, That Man Again (6th), 15-2 Lady Sheriff (4th), 8 Squire Corrie (5th), 10 Stuffed, 12 Kira, 14 Lago Di Varano, 16 For The Present, 20 Tadeo, 33 Chemcast. 14 ran. 1l, nk, 1½l, 1l, 1½l. I Balding at Kingsclere. Tote: £6.60; £2.60, £4.20, £2.50. DF: £94.00. Trio: £183.40. CSF: £115.14. Tricast: £794.69.

2.40 (1m 3f 195yd) 1, DREAM OF NURMI (R Ffrench, 11-2); 2, Remaadi Sun (R Street, 25-1); 3, Shaft Of Light (L Dettori, 4-1 jt-fav). ALSO RAN: 4-1 jt-fav Present Arms, 11-2 Mithak (5th), 7 Hen Harrier, 8 Heart Of Gold (4th), 10 Lomberto, 12 Brandon Magic, Lawahik (6th), 20 Far Ahead, 33 Manful. 12 ran. NR: Oops Pettie. 1¼l, 3½l, 1¾l, 1l, 2l. D Loder at Newmarket. Tote: £6.40; £2.00, £4.00, £1.60. DF: £50.40. Trio: £74.20. CSF: £136.92. Tricast: £576.54.

3.10 (6f) 1, BINT ALBAADIYA (J Reid, 4-1); 2, Bollin Joanne (K Fallon, 7-2); 3, Connemara (D Harrison, 11-1). ALSO RAN: 11-10 fav Nightbird (4th), 8 Elegant Warning (6th), 16 Wellspring, 20 China Girl (5th), 50 Queen's Pageant. 8 ran. Nk, 4l, 2l, ¾l, 4l. M Stoute at Newmarket. Tote: £4.80; £1.60, £1.20, £3.10. DF: £7.10. CSF: £18.05.

3.40 (7f 202yd) 1, JO MELL (L Charnock, 3-1 fav); 2, Therhea (A Whelan, 9-1); 3, Pride of Pendle (K Fallon, 9-1). ALSO RAN: 6 Duraid, Mihriz, 10 Cashmere Lady, Pomona (5th), Sandmoor Chambray (6th), 16 Band On The Run (4th), Moving Arrow, 20 Artaxerxes, Iamus, 33 Trailblazer, Zorba. 14 ran. 1½l, 2l, 1½l, 1¼l, 1l. T Easterby at Malton. Tote: £4.20; £2.30, £2.50, £2.00. DF: £24.70. Trio: £33.90. CSF: £28.12. Tricast: £209.55.

4.10 (7f 202yd) 1, ALI-ROYAL (K Fallon, 4); 2, Wait-A-Minute (T Quinn, 50-1); 3, Restructure (Pat Eddery, 8-1). ALSO RAN: 4-7 fav Kahal (4th), 33 General Song (5th), Kala Sunrise (6th). 6 ran. 2½l, 2l, 2l, 22l, 14l. H Cecil at Newmarket. Tote: £2.70; £1.50, £4.20. DF: £33.70. CSF: £73.62.

4.40 (6f 214yd) 1, SHARP PLAY (D McKeown, 16-1); 2, Mowbray (T Quinn, 13-2); 3, Success And Glory (K Fallon, 11-4). ALSO RAN: 7-4 fav Rabah, 3 Mumtaaz, 9 Pay On Red (5th), 14 Mihnah (4th), Red Cascade, 20 Captain McCloy (6th), 33 Lambrini Lad. 10 ran. 3½l, 1½l, sh hd, 4l, 5l. M Johnston at Middleham. Tote: £28.80; £3.40, £2.70, £1.40. DF: £80.00. Trio: £147.40. CSF: £124.91.

Jackpot: Not won (pool of £32,454.35 carried forward to York today).

Placepot: £287.40. Quadpot: £14.70.

Lingfield Park

Going: good to firm (turf); standard (AW)

2.30 (5f) 1, INTIAASH (M Dwyer, 5-1); 2, Anselman (T E Durcan, 9-4 fav); 3, Mister Raider (A Daly, 16-1). ALSO RAN: 3 Just Loui (5th), 4 Lucky Dip (4th), 16 Last Chance, 33 Green Golightly, 50 Durable George (6th). 8 ran. ½l, 1¾l, 1½l, 1½l, 4l. D Haydn Jones at Pontypridd. Tote: £6.90; £1.40, £1.40, £3.40. DF: £8.20. CSF: £13.72.

3.00 (6f) 1, ACID TEST (Martin Dwyer, 3-1); 2, Little Tumbler (N Day, 11-1); 3, The Imposter (S Whitworth, 10-1). ALSO RAN: 5-2 fav Tender Doll (4th), 4 Hamage, 6 Calliram (5th), 12 Sweet Senorita, 14 Inner Key (6th), 20 Global Risk, Wideyedbushytailed. 10 ran. NR: Just A Stroll, Teepee. Hd, 2½l, nk, ¾l, 5l. W Muir at Lambourn. Tote: £3.60; £1.50, £3.00, £2.20. DF: £96.80. Trio: £100.30. CSF: £37.18.

3.30 (6f) 1, OUT LINE (N Varley, 8-1); 2, Senorita Matilda (Dane O'Neill, 12-1); 3, Davis Rock (Martin Dwyer, 7-1). ALSO RAN: 5-1 fav Pharaoh's Joy (5th), 11-2 Tachycardia (4th), 6 Curzon Street, 13-2 Midnight Shift, 9 College Night (6th), 12 Forgotten Times, 14 Bevelled Crystal, Silver Purse, 20 May Queen Megan, Primelta. 13 ran. NR: Always Grace, Polgwynne. 1¾l, hd, 1l, nk, ¾l. M Madgwick at Denmead. Tote: £11.20; £3.70, £6.80, £2.50. DF: £149.30. Trio: £156.00. CSF: £100.95. Tricast: £679.92.

4.00 (7f 140yd) 1, BRILLIANT RED (G Duffield, 7-4 fav); 2, Mawingo (R Hughes, 3-1); 3, Rakis (Dane O'Neill, 11-2). ALSO RAN: 7 Albert The Beer (4th), 15-2 China Red (5th), 14 Henry The Fifth (6th). 6 ran. Shd, 2l, hd, ½l, dist. P Hedger at Chichester. Tote: £2.30; £1.60, £1.50. DF: £6.00. CSF: £5.88.

4.30 (1m 3f 106yd) 1, KROSNO (R Havlin, 8-1); 2, Bewitching Lady (Martin Dwyer, 20-1); 3, Swing West (C Rutter, 7-1). ALSO RAN: 3-1 fav Zorro, 11-2 Farley Mount, 13-2 Cartouche, 8 Mardrew (6th), Saltimbanco, 12 Ludo, 14 Rare Talent (5th), 16 Pen Friend (4th), 33 Frost King, Sylvan Jubilacion. 13 ran. 3½l, ½l, 3l, 7l, ¾l. S Williams at Newmarket. Tote: £9.70; £2.00, £5.20, £2.40. DF: £153.40. Trio: £397.20 (part won. Pool of £447.55 carried forward to York 4.15 today). CSF: £155.64. Tricast: £1,093.09.

5.00 (1m 2f) 1, LA MODISTE (R Hughes, 13-2); 2, Count Tony (W Ryan, 14-1); 3, Sweet Supposin (T Durcan, 13-2). ALSO RAN: 2-1 fav Bakers Daughter (4th), 13-2 Piquant, 8 Mazilla (5th), 11 Kingsdown Trix, 12 Law Dancer (6th), Sylvan Princess, 14 The Green Grey, 25 Sommersby, 50 Executive Officer, Subtle Touch. 13 ran. ½l, 3l, ¾l, 3l, ¾l. Miss G Kelleway at Whitcombe. Tote: £11.20; £3.30, £2.10, £2.00. DF: £82.10. Trio: £228.00. CSF: £91.94. Tricast: £577.67.

Placepot: £1,528.40. Quadpot: £582.10.

Wolverhampton

Going: standard

2.20 (6f) 1, Broadway Melody (D Holland, 10-1); 2, Castle Ashby Jack (2-1); 3, Bold Spring (6-5 fav). 7 ran. 3l, 2½l. A Jarvis. Tote: £12.30; £1.80, £1.40. DF: £25.40. CSF: £29.51.

2.50 (1m 1f 79yd) 1, Madam Lucy (S Carson, 2-1 fav); 2, Bon Guest (5-1); 3, Mysterium (5-1). 9 ran. ½l, 5l. W Haigh. Tote: £3.50; £2.20, £1.60, £1.50. DF: £7.40. Trio: £8.10. CSF: £11.64.

3.20 (7f) 1, Itsinthepost (F Norton, 5-1); 2, Mythical (7-1); 3, File Major (8-1). Wild Palm 9-4 fav. 11 ran. NR: Everset. ¾l, ½l. V Soane. Tote: £4.70; £1.70, £2.80, £2.80. DF: £9.70. Trio: £155.70 (part won. Pool of £46.07 carried forward to York 4.15 today). CSF: £40.29.

3.50 (1m 100yd) 1, People Direct (J Quinn, 9-2); 2, Duke Valentino (12-1); 3, Johnnie The Joker (9-2). Sweet Contralto 5-2 fav. 9 ran. NR: Waikiki Beach. 5l, ½l. N Littmoden. Tote: £3.80; £1.10, £3.20, £1.60. DF: £46.50. Trio: £28.10. CSF: £57.43. Tricast: £245.79.

4.20 (1m 4f) 1, Mystic Strand (D Sweeney, 4-1); 2, Esperto (2-5 fav); 3, Ballydinero (8-1). 5 ran. NR: Kayzee. 2½l, 15l. W Turner. Tote: £3.00; £1.10, £1.10. DF: £1.50. CSF: £5.77.

4.50 (5f) 1, Opening Range (P Bradley, 7-2); 2, Amy Leigh (11-2); 3, Marjorie Rose (2-1 fav). 7 ran. Nk, sh hd. N Berry. Tote: £5.30; £2.00, £5.50. DF: £10.50. CSF: £21.99.

Placepot: £10.20.

Quadpot: £8.20.

RACING NEXT WEEK

MONDAY: Ayr (first race, 2.15), Folkestone (2.00), Windsor (Sky, 6.30), Wolverhampton (Sky, 6.45)

TUESDAY: Beverley (2.00), Brighton (2.15).

WEDNESDAY: Catterick (2.15), Sandown Park (C4, 2.05), Yarmouth (1.50), Brighton (Sky, 6.20), *Doncaster (Sky, 5.30)*, Worcester (6.10)

THURSDAY: Bath (2.00), Leicester (2.15).

FRIDAY: Musselburgh (2.40), Newbury (2.30), Southwell (2.30), Newmarket (Sky, 6.30), *Pontefract (Sky, 6.45)*, Salisbury (6.20)

SATURDAY: Newbury (BBC, 1.30), Newmarket (C4, 2.10), Nottingham (2.20), Ripon (2.35), Ayr (Sky, 6.55), Redcar (Sky, 6.45), Warwick (6.35)

Flat meetings in bold

Fallon win justifies confidence

KIEREN FALLON repaid the faith shown by Charles Wacker III when guiding the owner's Ali-Royal to victory in the Foss Stakes at York yesterday. In the wake of Bosra Sham's defeat in the Eclipse there had been speculation that Fallon would lose the rides on Wacker-owned horses trained by Henry Cecil, including the 1,000 Guineas winner Sleepytime. But the Irishman put that behind him with a forceful ride on Ali-Royal, who may now tackle the Sussex Stakes at Goodwood.

Earlier on the card, Dream Of Nurmi found his way into the winner's enclosure and sparked happy memories for his owner, the Olympic gold medallist Chris Brasher. The colt is named in honour of Brasher's idol, Paavo Nurmi of Finland.

"It's great that the horse has managed a victory on the centenary of Nurmi's birth," said Brasher, who won the steeplechase in 1956.

Bint Albaadiya maintained her unbeaten record in the Singapore Summer Stakes.

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Wales give Buckett a second chance

RACING: WEIGHT OF MONEY SUGGESTS TRAINER HAS IDENTIFIED ATTRACTIVE OPPORTUNITY

Pasternak can justify York gamble

By Chris McGrath

SIR MARK PRESCOTT is the modern master of the clinical and perplexing art of placing a racehorse. While other trainers resort helplessly to a scattergun approach, Prescott is the nerveless sniper, waiting patiently for the handicapper to put his head over the parapet.

Bitter experience has caused the handicapper to be wary and suspicious; time and again, however, his adversary manages to find an unexpected angle, a clear line of sight — and all the signs are right that the trigger is about to be pulled at York today.

Unhappily, Pasternak's ante-post price for the 38th John Smiths Magnet Cup has more than halved since betting opened at the start of the week. The gamble has at least done us the service of confirming that Prescott is apparently taking aim; in which circumstances, it would be most out of character for the esteemed baronet to disappoint his followers.

Pasternak is the only runner not to have had an outing this season, yet there will not be a fitter horse in the field. Significantly, his final outing last autumn was in a 20-runner handicap over today's course and distance — a long-range sighter, no doubt — where he was repeatedly hampered in the straight, but was eventually produced on the outside to win by threequarters of a length, going away from his rivals. The handicapper felt obliged to restrict his punishment to 5lb.

That performance sealed the reformation that had seen Pasternak win a maiden on his previous start at Bath. A slow learner, the colt had proved particularly dull in being taught to settle. Prescott, so unsentimental about keeping four-year-olds in training, is transparently persuaded that Pasternak can now continue to progress — and that he has been given the chance to do so.

Of those standing in his way, Southerly Wind is most intriguing at the bottom of the handicap. He should have stayed the longer trip when disappointing at Royal Ascot last time over 1½ miles, and the soft ground is a better excuse. Either way, he had previously been fulfilling his potential, and represents Lynda Ramsden, one of the few trainers capable of causing the handicapper similar anguish to Prescott.

Another danger is Komi, like Pasternak a son of Soviet Star. Unexposed, he stayed on well to take second in the Britannia Handicap at the royal meeting and is bred to flourish over this extra distance.

That remains to be seen, however, and at the odds there could be better value about Bay Of Islands, representing a rather less well known yard. He took a while to find his stride when third at Redcar last time, and a strong gallop here would generate further improvement.

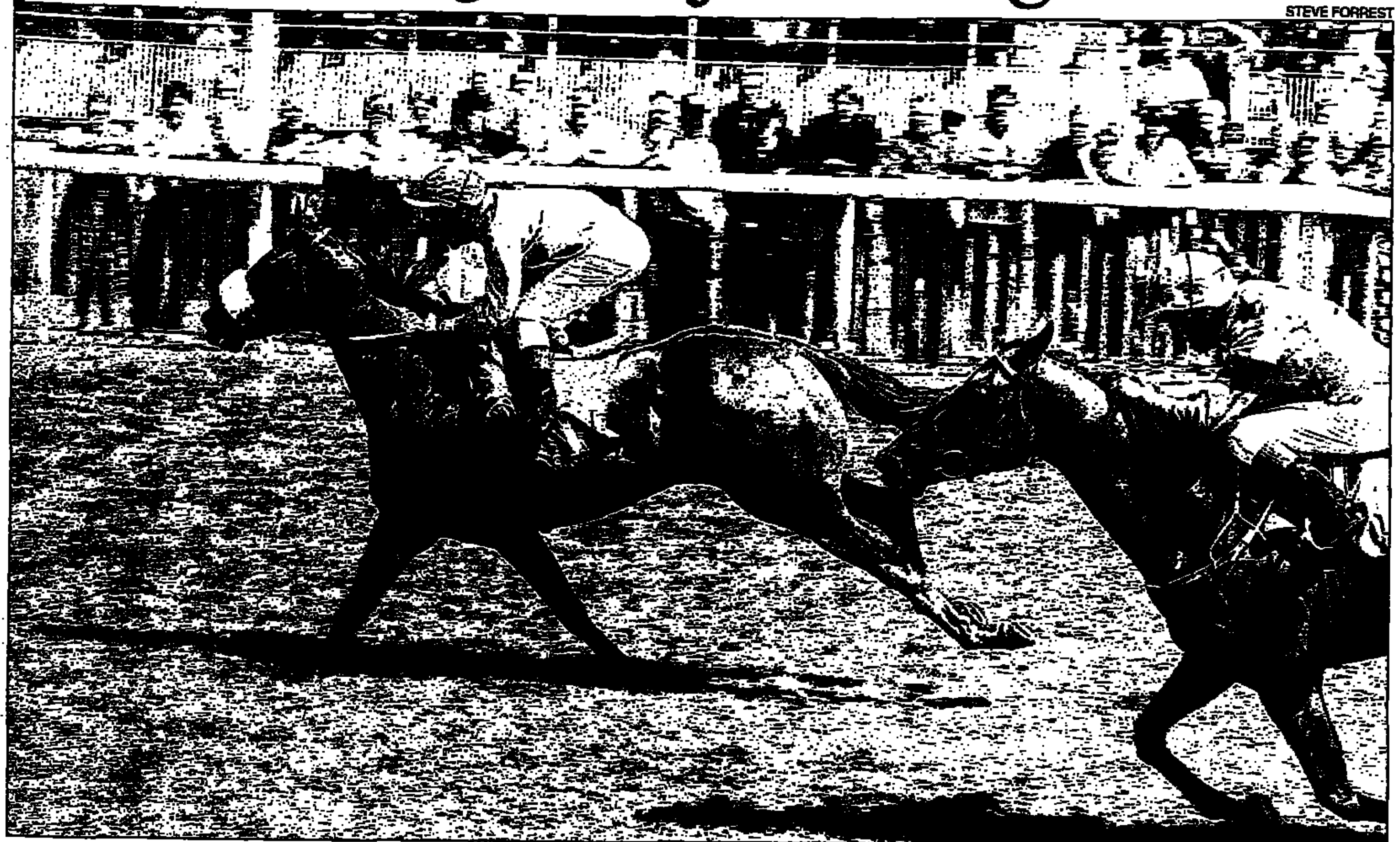
Jameel Asmar and Wahiba Sands have shown ability, but equally have not been easy to train, while the connections of Humourless command respect in their decision to drop back in trip. Sharp Consul is another that may not have quite stayed last time.

Wafir returns after his tumble at Ascot last time and is another who cannot readily be discounted.

RICHARD EVANS

Nap: HALOWING
(9.00 Warwick)
Next best: Willie Conquer
(3.40 York)

STEVE FORREST



Dashing Blue, ridden by Frankie Dettori, leads home Crofters Ceilidh in the Napoleons Racing Handicap at York yesterday

Yashmak primed for Oaks victory

By Chris McGrath

FOR a few days this week, Henry Cecil seemed to lose his grip on labour relations, but his touch with fillies remains beyond dispute. In the Kildangan Stud Irish Oaks at the Curragh tomorrow, Yashmak will try to confirm the resumption of business as usual by bringing a third fillies' classic of the season back to Warren Place.

Cecil's outspoken criticism of Kieren Fallon's tactics on another of his star fillies, Bosra Sham, at Sandown last weekend prompted a six-winner response at Newmarket's July meeting.

As the storm clouds have dispersed from Cecil and Fallon's relationship, their followers will now be looking for the real thing to appear over the Curragh. Yashmak's two impressive wins this season, including a nine-length demolition of the Ribblesdale field last time, were both on softened ground, and the Curragh will ride faster in the absence of thunderstorms.

Apart from the going, one might also have reservations about Yashmak's tantrum at Ascot, which required her to pass a stalls test during the week. Unless the ground eases, then, there is room for hope among the home contingent — especially as Brilliance, the French raider, is not a certain stayer.

Ebadiyla certainly has prospects of reversing Epsom form (behind Reams Of Verse) with Yashmak, two places ahead in fourth. That was a rough race for such an inexperienced filly, and a more patient ride could yield further improvement.

Aidan O'Brien has won all the season's Irish classics and saddles three runners in a bid to emulate Jack Rogers 62 years ago with a fourth. Strawberry Roan, the classiest, should stay this trip but disappointed when trying it in the Irish Derby.

If out of luck, for once, O'Brien will at least be hoping for further signs of excitement ahead from the 2,000 Guineas favourite, King Of Kings, who is taken on for the Omni Racing Anglesey Stakes by an unbeaten British raider, Princely Heir.

CURRAGH TOMORROW

GOING: GOOD — DRAW: NO ADVANTAGE

4.20 KILDANGAN STUD IRISH OAKS

BBC2

(Group I, 3-Y-O: £112,700: 1m 4f) (11 runners)

1	(5)	13-1	ABSOLUTE GLEE 36 (B,G,S) (Moyglare Stud Farm) D Weld 9-0	M J Kinane	80
2	(2)	315	ALIYA 21 (CD,S) (H H Aga Khan) J Oxx 9-0	P J Smullen	75
3	(3)	02-1113	BRILLIANCE 35 (BF,G,S) (Ecurie Skymarc Farm) P Bary (Fr) 9-0	S Guillot	[illegible]
4	(4)	-341343	CAISEAL ROS 15 (D,F,S) (D McAuliffe) J Bolger 9-0	–	92
5	(10)	136	EBADIYLA 37 (C,G) (H H Aga Khan) J Oxx 9-0	J P Murtagh	93
6	(8)	0313-35	ETOILE 37 (F) (Muteb Abdullah) P Chapple-Hyam (GB) 9-0	J Reid	95
7	(6)	035-303	FAMILY TRADITION 21 (B,G,S) (Mrs J Magnier) A P O'Brien 9-0	W J Supple	84
8	(1)	311-44	SHELL GINGER 49 (B,BF,S) (Mrs J Magnier) A P O'Brien 9-0	J A Heffernan	75
9	(9)	11-4120	STRAWBERRY ROAN 14 (S) (Mrs J Magnier) A P O'Brien 9-0	C Roche	97
10	(7)	0210101	VIA VERBANO 15 (C,G,S) (D Dobson) J Bolger 9-0	–	85
11	(11)	22-0141	YASHMAK 24 (D,F,G,S) (K Abdulla) H Cecil (GB) 9-0	K Fallon	97

BETTING: 13-8 Yashmak, 7-2 Brilliance, 11-2 Strawberry Roan, 7-1 Ebadiyla, 8-1 Absolute Glee, 10-1 Etoile, 16-1 Family Tradition, Shell Ginger, 20-1 others

1996 DANCE DESIGN 9-0 M J Kinane (9-2) D Weld 6 ran

YORK

THUNDERERER

2.10 Merlin's Ring
2.40 Tracking
3.10 Stackattack
3.40 Benatom
4.10 Secret Aly
4.40 Benzoe
5.15 Hirst Bridge

Our Newmarket Correspondent: 2.35 Tracking.
4.15 **HUMOURLESS** (nap).

GOING: GOOD (GOOD TO FIRM IN PLACES) — TOTE JACKPOT MEETING
DRAW: NO ADVANTAGE — SIS

2.00 JERVAULX MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES

(2-Y-O: £4,110: 6f) (15 runners)

101	(2)	3	EMPIRE PARK 17 (T Holdcroft) M Johnston 9-0	J Weaver	75
102	(11)	0	HEATHYARDS SHEIK 33 (L Morgan) R Hollinshead 9-0	F Lynch	74
103	(8)	0	HOWIES CHOICE 18 (R Howe) K McAuliffe 9-0	G Duffield	81
104	(12)	2	MERLIN'S RING 19 (Mrs R Plummer & Partners) I Balding 9-0	L Dettori	[illegible]
105	(6)	6	NAVIASKY 12 (H Muston) Mrs J Ramsden 9-0	M Deering	74
106	(4)	00	PERCY 8 (Mrs O Steele) J Bottomley 9-0	N Carlisle	72
107	(5)	3	REQUESTOR 8 (BF) (Marquesa de Moratalla) J FitzGerald 9-0	K Fallon	86
108	(1)	0	ROI DE DANSE 14 (A Miller) J Hills 9-0	A Munro	72
109	(14)	00	SHARP SHOOTER 31 (Mrs D Ridley) Mrs J Ramsden 9-0	O Pears	72
110	(7)		BOLLIN ANN (Lady Westbrook) T Easterby 8-9	J Carroll	–
111	(10)		DEKELSMARY (D Mossop) J Balding 8-9	J Edmunds	–
112	(13)		SMOOTH PRINCESS (J Smith's Ltd) J FitzGerald 8-9	J Quinn	–
113	(15)		STATUA (Skyline Racing Ltd) P Makin 8-9	R Cochrane	–
114	(3)		UP AT THE TOP (Mrs E Roberts) B Hills 8-9	M Hills	–
115	(9)		WEDDING BAND (Cheveley Park Stud) R Hannon 8-9	D Harrison	–

BETTING: 3-1 Merlin's Ring, 9-2 Empire Park, 7-1 Requestor, Wedding Band, 8-1 Naviasky, 10-1 others.

1996: PUN 8-9 W Carson (15-8 fav) D Morley 8 ran

FORM FOCUS

EMPIRE PARK 3¼l 3rd of 9 to Elegant in maiden at Carlisle (6f, firm). HEATHYARDS SHEIK 9¼l 8th of 14 to Tamarin Bay in auction maiden at Pontefract (5f, good to firm). HOWIES CHOICE 8l 7th of 14 to Opposition Leader in auction novice at Warwick (7f, good). MERLIN'S RING 2½l 2nd of 26 to Ben Rinnes in auction maiden at Windsor (6f, soft). NAVIASKY about 4l 6th of 9 to Marton Moss in auction maiden at Pontefract (5f, soft). REQUESTOR about 8l 3rd of 15 to Two Williams in maiden at Beverley (5f, heavy).
Selection: EMPIRE PARK

2.35 EXCLUSIVE CAFE BAR AT WAKEFIELD CONDITIONS STAKES

(2-Y-O: £6,386: 6f 214yd) (5 runners)

201	(3)	0122	CUMBRIAN CARUSO 12 (F) (Cumbrian Industrials Ltd) T Easterby 9-0	K Darley	93
202	(1)	3321	PROSE 12 (D) (Highclere Thoroughbred Racing Ltd) R Hannon 9-0	L Dettori	96
203	(4)	1	THE GLOW-WORM 14 (D,S) (Mrs J Corbett) B Hills 9-0	M Hills	93
204	(5)	1	TRACKING 24 (G) (Buckram Oak Holdings) H Cecil 9-0	K Fallon	[illegible]
205	(2)	66321	WINSOME GEORGE 22 (D,G) (C Barber-Lomax) C Fairhurst 9-0	N Kennedy	95

BETTING: Evens Tracking, 5-2 The Glow-Worm, 11-2 Prose, 8-1 Cumbrian Caruso, 10-1 Winsome George.

1996: SAHM 9-1 W Carson (1-6 fav) J Dunlop 2 ran

FORM FOCUS

CUMBRIAN CARUSO ½l 2nd of 6 to The Rich Man in conditions race at Pontefract (6f, soft). PROSE beat Rico Suave 7l in 7-runner maiden at Southwell (7f, AW). THE GLOW-WORM beat Mafaia ¾l in 10-runner maiden at Newmarket (7f, soft). TRACKING beat Demolition Jo 2½l in 5-runner novice race at Nottingham (6f, good). WINSOME GEORGE beat Hogarf 3l in 6-runner maiden at Ayr (7f, good).
Selection: TRACKING

3.10 JOHN SMITHS BITTER HANDICAP

C4

(£6,368: 6f 214yd) (18 runners)

301	(6)	41-6534	RAHEEN 42 (B Kietany) W G M Turner 4-9-13	DOUBTFUL	94
302	(5)	3000-65	ROYAL MARK 29 (D,F) (M Berle's 5th Family Settlement) T Barron 4-9-10	J Carroll	80
303	(17)	-000240	PERSIAN FAYRE 14 (CD,F,G) (M Grubb) J Berry 5-9-9	K Darley	94
304	(11)	0-00625	DELTA SOLEIL 22 (C,F) (American Connection I) P Harris 5-9-9	C Lowther (7)	97
305	(7)	4-30040	IRISH ACCORD 25 (F) (P Leonard) Mrs J Ramsden 3-9-8	A Munro	[illegible]
306	(16)	6063002	TERTIUM 14 (F) (J Barton) M Wane 5-9-6	A Whelan (3)	97
307	(15)	32-0383	ZELDA ZONK 29 (D,F,G) (Mrs C Painting) B Meehan 5-9-4	T Quinn	98
308	(1)	1031331	GREY KINGDOM 10 (C,D,F,G,S) (M Brittain) M Brittain 6-9-1	D Mernagh (7)	87
309	(4)	600-000	OSOMENTAL 13 (F,G) (H O'Donnell) D Haydn Jones 3-8-11	A Mackay	97
310	(18)	00-4004	SUALTACH 18 (D,F,S) (N Sweeney) R Hollinshead 4-8-10	K Fallon	87
311	(2)	0-22205	PRESENT CHANCE 7 (BF) (J Guise) B McMahon 3-8-9	M Roberts	95
312	(3)	4-00121	PERICLES 15 (D,S) (J Abell) M Johnston 3-8-9	K M Chin (3)	98
313	(9)	1402356	TAKHLID 15 (D,F,S) (Miss N Thesiger) D Chapman 6-8-8	A Culhane	97
314	(8)	6-02110	STACKATTACK 14 (D,F) (Miss E Ramsden) Mrs J Ramsden 4-8-7	F Lynch	91
315	(14)	15P0	MOUCHE 14 (F) (M Simmonds) Mrs J Ramsden 3-8-7	D Harrison	95
316	(10)	0050135	ANONYM 13 (B,D,F,G) (Wetherby Racing Bureau 28) J Eyre 5-8-1	T Williams	94
317	(13)	-305112	WINTER SCOUT 7 (B,BF,D,F,G,S) (Mrs S Russell) R Fahey 9-8-0	R Winston (7)	98
318	(12)	-054022	BOLLIN DOROTHY 9 (D,S) (Lady Westbrook) T Easterby 4-7-10	L Charnock	94

Long handicap: Bollin Dorothy 7-6.

BETTING: 6-1 Royal Mark, 13-2 Grey Kingdom, 8-1 Tertium, Stackattack, 10-1 Irish Accord, Pericles, 12-1 Delta Soleil, Zelda Zonk, 14-1 Anonym, Bollin Dorothy, Winter Scout, 16-1 others

1996: KESTON POND 6-8-10 M Deering (12-1) Mrs V Aconley 12 ran

FORM FOCUS

ROYAL MARK about 6¾l 5th of 10 to Tedburrow in handicap here (6f, good to soft). TERTIUM 3½l 2nd of 16 to Jo Mell in handicap at Newcastle (7f, heavy) with PERSIAN FAYRE (3lb better off) 7½l 7th, MOUCHE (5lb better off) 14l 9th and STACKATTACK (1lb better off) 6l 15th. ZELDA ZONK about ½l 3rd of 11 to Mass River in handicap at Sandown (7f, good to firm). GREY KINGDOM beat Chickawicka neck in 11-runner handicap at Epsom (7f, soft). PERICLES beat The Wyandotte 1½l in handicap at Wolverhampton (7f, AW) with PRESENT CHANCE 12l last. WINTER SCOUT beat Mr Cube ¾l in handicap at Carlisle (7f, firm).
Selection: ROYAL MARK

3.40 FOSTERS SILVER CUP RATED HANDICAP

C4

(£12,838: 1m 5f 194yd) (9 runners)

401	(7)	30120-0	BETTER OFFER 24 (F,G) (Lady Harrison) Mrs A Perrett 5-9-7	J Quinn	95
402	(4)	6303-22	FURTHER FLIGHT 56 (CD,F,G,S) (S Wingfield Digby) B Hills 11-9-4	M Hills	94
403	(2)	03620-3	POLTARF 25 (D,F,S) (Sheikh Mohammed) J Gosden 6-9-2	L Dettori	93
404	(9)	0374-04	SNOW PRINCESS 52 (F,G,S) (Lord Weinstock) Lord Huntingdon 5-8-12	D Harrison	94
405	(8)	255/3-4	CUFF LINK 22 (D,F) (Lord Weinstock) W Hern 7-8-10	R Cochrane	–
406	(5)	106-215	TOP CEES 14 (BF,F,G,S) (R Sangster) Mrs J Ramsden 7-8-8	A Munro	[illegible]
407	(6)	1151-33	WILLIE CONQUER 24 (F) (R Tooth) R Akehurst 5-8-7	T Quinn	94
408	(1)	160-540	BENATOM 14 (D,F,G) (T Harris) H Cecil 4-8-7	K Fallon	98
409	(3)	12531-	MATTAWAN 283 (F,G) (Sheikh Mohammed) M Johnston 4-8-7	J Weaver	90

Long handicap: Benatom 8-6, Mattawan 8-6

BETTING: 4-1 Mattawan, 9-2 Further Flight, 5-1 Top Cees, Snow Princess, 6-1 Benatom, Willie Conquer, 8-1 Poltarf, 12-1 Better Offer, 20-1 Cuff Link.

1996: CELERIC 4-9-7 W Carson (evens fav) D Morley 5 ran

FORM FOCUS

FURTHER FLIGHT 3¼l 2nd of 6 to Persian Punch in listed race at Newbury (1m 5f 61yd, soft). POLTARF about 2l 3rd of 9 to Philanthrop in listed race at Maisons-Laffitte (1m 7f, good to soft). SNOW PRINCESS about 3¾l 4th of 9 to Jiyush in handicap at Goodwood (1m 6f, good) with BENATOM (2lb better off) ¾l 5th. TOP CEES beat Eberby Park 10l in the 12-runner Chester Cup Handicap at Chester (2m 2f 117yd, soft). WILLIE CONQUER 3½l 3rd of 19 to Zaralaska in the Bessborough Handicap at Royal Ascot (1m 4f, good to firm). MATTAWAN beat Coro ¾l in 10-runner event at Dielsdorf, Munich (1m 4f 110yd, good).
Selection: FURTHER FLIGHT

GUIDE TO OUR RACECARD

103 (12) 0-0432 GOOD TIMES 74 (CD,BF,F,G,S) (Mrs D Robinson) B Hall 9-10-0 B West (4) 88

Racecard number. Draw in brackets. Six-figure form (F — fell. P — pulled up. U — unseated rider. B — brought down. S — slipped up. R — refused. D — disqualified). Horse's name. Days since last outing; J if jumps, F if flat. (B — blinkers. V — visor. H — hood. E — Eyeshield. C — course winner. D — distance winner CD — course and distance winner BF — beaten favourite in latest race) Going on which horse has won (F — firm, good to firm, hard. G — good. S — soft, good to soft, heavy). Owner in brackets. Trainer. Age and weight. Rider plus any allowance. The Times Private Handicapper's rating.

4.15 38TH JOHN SMITHS MAGNET CUP

C4

(Handicap: £62,756: 1m 2f 85yd) (21 runners)

501	(9)	120-364	KEY TO MY HEART 28 (CD,F,G,S) (Mrs M Pickering) Miss S Hall 7-10-0	J Weaver	88
502	(15)	05-0510	PRINCE OF MY HEART 35 (C,G,S) (G Hicks) B Hills 4-9-9	C Lowther (7)	[illegible]
503	(11)	1/03-50	WAHIBA SANDS 24 (F) (Lord Swaythling) J Dunlop 4-8-13	K Darley	89
504	(4)	4416-30	BALL GOWN 51 (D,F,G,S) (C Lines) D Thom 7-8-13	D R McCabe	89
505	(20)	-410200	KUALA LIPIS 24 (C,F) (H R H Sultan Ahmad Shah) P Cole 4-8-13	T Quinn	95
506	(6)	4/12-36	HUMOURLESS 24 (BF,D,G) (Sheikh Mohammed) L Cumani 4-8-12	L Dettori	92
507	(18)	2301265	MAJOR CHANGE 35 (D,F) (Two In One Pens) Miss G Kelleway 5-8-11	K Fallon	92
508	(19)	/12-300	NAJM MUBEEN 24 (D,F,G) (Sheikh A al-Maktoum) A Stewart 4-8-10	M Roberts	93
509	(5)	00-5325	GAME PLOY 21 (D,F,G) (K Kynaston) D Haydn Jones 5-8-10	R Cochrane	95
510	(8)	3-30626	STAR MANAGER 21 (G,S) (M Arbib) P Cole 7-8-4	M Hills	96
511	(13)	45-1550	ANOTHER TIME 24 (D,F,G) (D Sullivan) S Woods 5-8-4	A Munro	90
512	(3)	-261200	SECRET ALY 15 (D,F,G) (B Veal) C Brittain 7-8-3	J Carroll	93
513	(1)	520311-	PASTERNAK 276 (CD,G,S) (G Rock) M Prescott 4-8-3	G Duffield	97
514	(16)	60-021F	WAFIR 21 (D,G,S) (K MacPherson) P Calver 5-8-3	Darren Moffatt (3)	91
515	(17)	2312	KOMI 25 (G) (Sheikh Mohammed) M Stoute 3-8-1	F Lynch	98
516	(14)	2016-22	SHARP CONSUL 57 (D,S) (Mrs D Blackburn) H Candy 5-8-1	C Rutter	97
517	(7)	1/05513	BAY OF ISLANDS 21 (CD,F) (Bloomsbury Stud) D Morris 5-7-13	N Day	96
518	(21)	063-013	FAHS 35 (BF,D,G) (City Industrial Supplies Ltd) R Akehurst 5-7-13	J Quinn	95
519	(10)	60-3214	ORSAY 7 (BF,D,G,S) (D Deer) W Muir 5-7-12	J Lowe	97
520	(12)	15202/0	JAMEEL ASMAR 28 (D,F,G) (P Leonard) C Egerton 5-7-12	A Whelan (3)	–
521	(2)	213-120	SOUTHERLY WIND 23 (F,G) (M Simmonds) Mrs J Ramsden 3-7-10	L Charnock	96

Long handicap: Southerly Wind 7-8.

BETTING: 9-2 Pasternak, 5-1 Komi, 7-1 Humourless, 10-1 Southerly Wind, 12-1 Fahs, 14-1 Sharp Consul, 16-1 Game Ploy, Najm Mubeen, Orsay, Wahiba Sands, 20-1 Bay Of Islands, Kuala Lipis, Wafir, 25-1 others

1996: WILCUMA 5-9-2 Pat Eddery (10-1) P Makin 17 ran

FORM FOCUS

PRINCE OF MY HEART beat Wilawa 7l in 11-runner handicap at Newbury (1m 1f, soft). MAJOR CHANGE 4l 2nd of 12 to Give Me A Ring in handicap over course and distance (good) with GAME PLOY (3lb worse off) ½l 3rd, WAHIBA SANDS about ¾l 5th and STAR MANAGER 1½l 6th. PASTERNAK beat Obelos ¾l in 20-runner handicap over course and distance (good) Oct 96. WAFIR neck 2nd of 12 to Champagne Prince in the Zetland Gold Cup Handicap at Redcar (1m 2f, good to firm) with NAJM MUBEEN (6lb better off) about 6¾l 7th. KOMI 1¼l 2nd of 28 to Fly To The Stars in the Britannia Handicap at Royal Ascot (1m, good). SHARP CONSUL neck 2nd of 16 to Champagne Prince in handicap at Newmarket (1m 2f, good) with BAY OF ISLANDS (1lb better off) about 2¾l 5th and WAFIR (3lb better off) 6¾l 9th. BAY OF ISLANDS about ¾l 3rd of 9 to Hen Harrier in handicap at Redcar (1m 2f, good).
Selection: GAME PLOY (nap)

4.45 NEWCASTLE BROWN ALE HANDICAP

C4

(£6,628: 6f) (22 runners)

601	(14)	010365	ZUHAIR 8 (D,F) (C Bigley Partnership Ltd) D McCain 4-10-0	J Carroll	89
602	(2)	01-1614	OGGI 22 (D,F,G,S) (Skyline Racing Ltd) P Makin 6-9-11	R Cochrane	94
603	(21)	5103310	DAAWE 14 (CD,F,G) (Mrs A Mallinson) Mrs V Aconley 6-9-6	M Deering	85
604	(3)	6101351	PALACEGATE TOUCH 8 (B,D,F,G,S) (Laurel Ltd) J Berry 7-9-5	C Lowther (7)	97
605	(22)	0044-25	SAINT EXPRESS 15 (C,D,F) (D Hall) Mrs M Reveley 7-9-4	A Culhane	97
606	(18)	1033031	SO INTREPID 11 (D,F,G,S) (E Hayward) J Bradley 7-9-4	G Duffield	91
607	(8)	2201-04	FARAWAY LASS 32 (CD,F,G) (J Rose) Lord Huntingdon 4-9-1	D Harrison	90
608	(17)	1842200	PRIMA SILK 4 (D,F,S) (Norcroft Park Stud) M Ryan 6-8-10	G Bardwell	94
609	(11)	0-00000	MALLIA 14 (B,CD,F,G) (H Duddin) T Barron 4-8-9	K Darley	90
610	(20)	01-5422	NATURAL KEY 24 (BF,D,F,G) (H O'Donnell) D Haydn Jones 4-8-8	A Mackay	92
611	(15)	0331060	BENZOE 13 (CD,F,G,S) (T Fawcett) Mrs J Ramsden 7-8-6	J Fanning	[illegible]
612	(13)	0000601	BAYIN 14 (D,F,G,S) (T Barker) M Usher 8-8-5	R Street	94
613	(9)	2402-06	MARSAD 61 (BF) (Canisbay Bloodstock Ltd) R Akehurst 3-8-5	T Quinn	90
614	(6)	2630363	BEE HEALTH BOY 9 (B,D,F,S) (Bee Health Ltd) M W Easterby 4-8-5	G Parkin (3)	93
615	(12)	40-0623	THWAAB 28 (V,D,F,G) (J Blythe) F Watson 5-8-4	K Fallon	98
616	(10)	-300302	STYLE DANCER 5 (D,F) (Mrs C Hodgetts) R Whitaker 3-8-3	A Munro	98
617	(5)	4415411	RUM LAD 9 (D,F,S) (B Shaw) J J Quinn 3-8-2	J Lowe	93
618	(16)	0-45	VAN CHINO 35 (Barouche Stud Ltd) B McMahon 3-8-2	M Roberts	87
619	(1)	05-0050	U-NO-HARRY 28 (D,F) (D Coppenhall) R Hollinshead 4-8-1	F Lynch	91
620	(7)	1214000	FOIST 9 (D,G,S) (D Spence) M W Easterby 5-8-0	L Charnock	97
621	(4)	0010000	HALMANERROR 9 (C,D,F,G,S) (Mrs J Smith) Mrs J Ramsden 7-7-10	J Quinn	93
622	(19)	0004112	MISTER WESTSOUND 8 (B,BF,D,F,G) (I Hay) Miss L Perratt 5-7-10	N Kennedy	90

Long handicap: Mister Westsound 7-3

BETTING: 11-2 Oggi, 10-1 Bayin, Marsad, 12-1 Thwaab, 14-1 Bee Health Boy, Benzoe, Palacegate Touch, Rum Lad, Saint Express, So Intrepid, 16-1 Daawe, Faraway Lass, Mallia, Style Dancer, 20-1 others

1996: DOUBLE SPLENDOUR 6-9-9 K Darley (4-1 fav) P Felgate 16 ran

FORM FOCUS

OGGI about 2½l 4th of 30 to Selhurstpark Flyer in the Wokingham Handicap at Royal Ascot (6f, good to soft). DAAWE beat SAINT EXPRESS (6lb better off) 1½l in 10-runner handicap at Redcar (6f, good) with BEE HEALTH BOY (7lb better off) 1l 3rd and BENZOE (11lb better off) about 1¼l 6th. PALACEGATE TOUCH beat MISTER WESTSOUND (3lb worse off) 1¼l in 8-runner handicap at Hamilton (6f, good to soft). SO INTREPID beat Runs In The Family ½l in 13-runner handicap at Chepstow (5f, soft). BEE HEALTH BOY about 2l 3rd of 13 to Desert Lynx in handicap at Haydock (6f, good to soft) with HALMANERROR (3lb better off) 3½l 7th and FOIST (3lb better off) 6½l 10th. THWAAB 2¾l 3rd of 23 to Grey Kingdom in handicap over course and distance (good to soft) with SO INTREPID (5lb worse off) 5¾l 9th, U-NO-HARRY (1lb better off) 1l 10th, BAYIN (3lb worse off) ½l 13th, BENZOE (4lb better off) 1½l 14th, HALMANERROR (5lb better off) 17th and FOIST (5lb better off) 5l 20th.
Selection: SO INTREPID

5.15 FISHERGATE NURSERY HANDICAP (2-Y-O: £5,580: 5f) (7 runners)

1	(7)	34111	BABY GRAND 21 (D,F,G) (Mrs D Sharp) T Barron 9-7	Kimberley Hart (5)	96
2	(2)	2135	HIRST BRIDGE 37 (B,D,S) (J Bray) M W Easterby 9-5	T Lucas	97
3	(3)	10	SOCKET SET 14 (D) (J Fretwell) B McMahon 9-5	M Roberts	[illegible]
4	(6)	462	MYSTICISM 12 (Mrs C Brittain) C Brittain 8-12	L Dettori	92
5	(5)	41031	PENNILESS 31 (D,G) (Consultco Ltd) N Tinkler 8-11	Kim Tinkler	98
6	(1)	044	GRAND ESTATE 14 (I Armitage) T Easterby 8-2	K Darley	97
7	(4)	3500	ADRENALIN 25 (T Fawcett) Mrs J Ramsden 7-10	L Charnock	98

Long handicap: Adrenalin 7-8

BETTING: 3-1 Baby Grand, 7-2 Mysticism, 9-2 Penniless, 5-1 Grand Estate, 13-2 Hirst Bridge, 7-1 Socket Set, 8-1 Adrenalin.

1996: TOP OF THE FORM 8-5 T Williams (7-2 jt-fav) M Johnston 8 ran

FORM FOCUS

BABY GRAND beat Premium Pursuit ½l in 5-runner auction novice at Ayr (5f, good). HIRST BRIDGE 5l 5th of 8 to Only For Gold in conditions race at Beverley (5f, good to firm). SOCKET SET beat Happy Days 1½l in 12-runner auction maiden at Southwell (5f, AW). MYSTICISM 2¾l 3rd of 9 to Suivez La Trace in auction maiden at Pontefract (5f, soft). PENNILESS beat Sandy Shore ¾l in 11-runner claimer at Beverley (5f, good to firm). GRAND ESTATE about 7¾l 4th of 10 to Deeceebee in maiden at Newcastle (6f, heavy).
Selection: BABY GRAND

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rnrs	%	JOCKEYS	Winners	Rides	%
W Hern	5	19	26.3	D R McCabe	4	17	23.5
H Cecil	24	96	25.0	L Dettori	42	185	22.7
M Prescott	4	18	22.2	G Parkin	3	19	15.8
J Gosden	19	94	20.2	M Roberts	17	120	14.2
M Stoute	25	125	20.0	G Duffield	8	57	14.0
J Dunlop	18	92	19.6	R Cochrane	13	109	11.9

Conditions are right for Mallia to strike

TODAY'S RACES ON TELEVISION

YORK
CHANNEL 4

3.10: Lynda Ramsden sets a puzzle by saddling three runners. Stackattack could come out best of them after getting bogged down at Newcastle last time, but preference — especially if the ground keeps drying out — is for **Royal Mark**, just denied in a valuable race over course and distance last year when trained by Bill Watts. He has slipped to a 4lb lower mark, despite having shaped well on both starts for his new connections, notably over an inadequate six furlongs last time. Bollin Dorothy represents an in-form yard.

3.40: A trappy race, in which Willie Conquer steps up in trip after finishing third in the Bessborough at Royal Ascot. He pulled hard even off the strong pace there, however, and may not get home. By contrast, this small field and drying ground may not provide Top Cees with the test he needs at this trip. Benatom is a possibility back on faster going, but **Further Flight** continues to enchant his admirers at 11 and may not be done yet. He kept on well when finding his stride last time, and has been freshened up by a break.

4.15: See above.

4.45: Bollin Joanne's fine run here yesterday, along with Danetime's win at the July meeting, makes Oggi's Wokingham fourth read all the better, but **Mallia** is worth a close look despite unpromising form figures. There are excuses for them all, chiefly unsuitably soft ground, sometimes compounded by a poor draw or inappropriate trip. As a result, he has been dropped 14lb since the start of the season, and is strongly fancied on his return to the course and distance of his success in the valuable William Hill Trophy last summer — especially if the ground continues to dry out. A middle draw allows Kevin Darley to choose his favoured side.

Chris McGrath

WARWICK

THUNDERER
6.30 Fayrana. 7.00 Grovefair Lad. 7.30 Paradise Navy. 8.00 Night Express. 8.30 Malabi. 9.00 Song Mist.

GOING: GOOD TO FIRM (GOOD IN PLACES) — SIS
DRAW: 5F-7F, LOW NUMBERS BEST

6.30 NICK KNIGHT MAIDEN AUCTION FILLIES STAKES (2-Y-O: £2,785: 7f) (13 runners)

1		FANTI DANCER B Meehan 8-7	G Hannon (7)	12
2	6022	FAYRANA 32 J Hills 8-7	N Adams	8
3		JATO DANCER M Channon 8-7	R Perham	6
4	2332	SHARP CRACKER 35 M Johnston 8-7	J Weaver	5
5		THEME TUNE Dr J Scargill 8-7	J Tate	13
6	0	GOD KNOWS 28 M Fetherston-Godley 8-4	F Norton	3
7		LAVERNOCK LADY J J Quinn 8-4	N Connorton	9
8	00	AMASAPPHIRE 14 R Hodges 8-1	J Stack	4
9		RUBY BEAR W M Brisbourne 8-1	R Mullen (5)	11
10	05	SHALAD'OR 32 B Millman 8-1	B Doyle	2
11	00	SING FOR ME 26 R Hollinshead 8-1	N Carlisle	1
12	6430	TREMONNOW 7 J Bradley 8-1	T Williams	7
13	0523	UNIVERSAL LADY 14 C James 8-1	C Rutter	10

2-1 Sharp Cracker, 4-1 Fayrana, Universal Lady, 10-1 Fanti Dancer, Shalad'or, Tremonnow, 12-1 Jato Dancer, 16-1 others.

7.00 ANDY MOLES SELLING HANDICAP

(£2,910: 1m 2f 169yd) (10)

1	0124	ARZANI 10 (G) D Cosgrove 6-9-11	R Hughes	1
2	-320	ACQUITTAL 33 (V,D,F) A Streeter 5-8-12	S Sanders	10
3	0/05	OPERA FAN 24 K Morgan 5-8-11	Dean McKeown	9
4	0060	WHOTHEHELLISHARRY 17 P Dalton 4-8-7	P McCabe (3)	4
5	0036	RUNIC SYMBOL 10 (F) M Blanshard 6-8-6	J Quinn	6
6	3440	HOH DOWN 35 R Juckes 3-8-5	V Slattery	2
7	0045	GROVEFAIR LAD 17 M Wane 3-7-12	A Whelan (3)	8
8	-066	FOOLISH FLUTTER 8 R Bastiman 3-7-10	R Winston (7)	5
9	000-	DUBAI DOLLY 47J J Mullins 4-7-10	N Varley	3
10	0-00	TOCCO JEWEL 47 (S) M Ryan 7-7-10	M Baird (3)	7

7-2 Arzani, 5-1 Runic Symbol, Grovefair Lad, 6-1 Opera Fan, Foolish Flutter, 13-2 Hoh Down, 7-1 Acquittal, 8-1 others.

7.30 WATCH SECURITY HANDICAP

(£3,200: 1m 6f 194yd) (12)

1	3330	PARADISE NAVY 18 (B,D,F,G) C Egerton 8-9-13	R Hughes	2
2	0015	SALSKA 18 (CD,F,G) A Streeter 6-9-7	R Havlin (3)	6
3	01-4	SARASOTA STORM 19 (BF,D,F,S) M Bell 5-9-1	M Fenton	5
4	3/41	SCHNOZZLE 18 (C,S) K Bridgwater 6-8-10	T Quinn	4
5	0251	MAY KING MAYHEM 7 (G) Mrs A King 4-8-6	T Williams	1
6	2230	ROMALITO 18 (F) M Blanshard 7-8-5	J Quinn	12
7	-031	ROYAL CIRCUS 5 (F,G,S) I Williams 8-8-2 (5ex)	R Ffrench (5)	7
8	0/5-	TOPAGLOW 123J P Dalton 4-8-0	N Varley	10
9	5331	INDIGO DAWN 8 (S) M Johnston 3-7-12	N Adams	3
10	0436	BISQUET-DE-BOUCHE 10 R Dickin 3-7-10	R Winston (7)	9
11	50-2	HILLSWICK 44 J King 6-7-10	A Polli (5)	8
12	500/	CHICAGO'S BEST 434J K Comerford 10-7-10	N Carlisle	11

5-2 Indigo Dawn, 6-1 Salska, 7-1 May King Mayhem, 8-1 Sarasota Storm, Schnozzle, 10-1 Royal Circus, Bisquet-de-Bouche, 12-1 others.

8.00 HOLSTEN PILS HANDICAP

(£3,018: 5f) (11)

1	0111	THE FUGATIVE 3 (D,F,S) P Mitchell 4-10-0 (7ex)	A Whelan (3)	9
2	0040	BEAU VENTURE 26 (D,F,G,S) B Palling 9-9-10	D Sweeney (5)	2
3	1403	RIVER TERN 26 (F,G) J Bradley 4-9-9	R Ffrench (5)	5
4	4245	NIGHT EXPRESS 7 (BF) B Hanbury 3-9-4	J Stack	1
5	4006	SHARP STOCK 21 R Hodges 4-9-3	B Doyle	6
6	6-43	MULLAGH HILL LAD 14 (B,D) B McMahon 4-8-12	S Sanders	3
7	2000	CAPTAIN SINBAD 24 (B) K Bridgwater 5-8-7	V Slattery	8
8	5-56	WINDRUSH BOY 43 (CD,F,G) M R Bosley 7-8-7	C Rutter	10
9	-000	FORZARA 5 (B,D,G) J Spearing 4-8-4	S Drowne	4
10	4350	SOTONIAN 4 (D) P Felgate 4-8-2	A Polli (5)	7
11	0-06	IOULIOS 49 J Banks 3-7-10	J Quinn	11

5-2 The Fugative, 9-2 Mullagh Hill Lad, 5-1 River Tern, 13-2 Night Express, 7-1 Sotonian, 8-1 Beau Venture, Sharp Stock, 10-1 others

8.30 HBG HIGGS & HILL MAIDEN STAKES

(£3,900: 7f) (13)

1	0-02	AWASSI 8 K Mahdi 4-9-7	D O'Donohoe (3)	2
2	00	KAILEY GODDESS 4 R Armstrong 4-9-7	J Quinn	1
3	00	BADRINATH 96 H Collingridge 3-8-13	M Fenton	6
4	23	JORROCKS 19 (BF) I Balding 3-8-13	Martin Dwyer (3)	7
5	23	MALABI 28 (BF) J Dunlop 3-8-13	T Quinn	11
6	0-00	PETSONG 19 V Soane 3-8-13	S Sanders	13
7	3	SWEET FORTUNE 21 M Stoute 3-8-13	J Reid	3
8	0	BEAUCATCHER 8 M Heaton-Ellis 3-8-8	S Drowne	12
9		FLYING FLIP B Morgan 3-8-8	Dean McKeown	10
10	03	LAS VISTAS 39 H Collingridge 3-8-8	N Adams	5
11	3-3	MADE BOLD 7 H Candy 3-8-8	C Rutter	9
12	0	MADGE'S PET 9 G Barnett 3-8-8	N Carlisle	4
13	44	SHOSHALOZA 7 P R Webber 3-8-8	R Perham	8

3-1 Sweet Fortune, 7-2 Made Bold, 4-1 Malabi, 9-2 Jorrocks, 8-1 Awassi, Shoshaloza, 10-1 Las Vistas, 14-1 others

9.00 DOMINIC OSTLER FILLIES HANDICAP

(3-Y-O: £4,123: 7f) (12)

1	5-50	SECRET COMBE 28 (F) P Makin 9-7	R Havlin (3)	9
2	0603	HALOWING 17 (F) J G Smyth-Osbourne 9-4	D Sweeney (5)	2
3	160-	BRISKA 284 (CD,F) R Akehurst 9-3	S Sanders	4
4	6-00	CARIBBEAN STAR 47 M Stoute 9-2	J Reid	11
5	4534	SONG MIST 28 (F) P Cole 9-1	T Quinn	5
6	31	FARLEY GREEN 45 (D,F) H Candy 8-13	C Rutter	10
7	0000	TABASCO JAZZ 5 B Meehan 8-7	G Hannon (7)	6
8	-240	FREE AS A BIRD 17 (BF) M Channon 8-6	R Perham	12
9	-040	MIDYAN QUEEN 14 R Hollinshead 8-3	F Lynch	8
10	-004	MY GIRL LUCY 9 P Mitchell 8-1	A Whelan (3)	1
11	01	PROSPERING 29 (D,F) R Hodges 7-10	J Quinn	3
12	6-00	WRN PRINCESS 19 B Meehan 7-10	Martin Dwyer (3)	7

5-1 Farley Green, 6-1 Halowing, Song Mist, 7-1 Prospering, 8-1 Caribbean Star, Free As A Bird, Midyan Queen, 10-1 others

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: A Streeter, 4 winners from 14 runners, 28.6%. J Dunlop, 11 from 42, 26.2%. B Hanbury, 3 from 13, 23.1%. J Hills, 4 from 21, 19.0%. M Heaton-Ellis, 6 from 33, 18.2%. M Stoute, 4 from 23, 17.4%. P Makin, 6 from 35, 17.1%.

JOCKEYS: J Reid, 17 winners from 89 rides, 19.1%. T Quinn, 16 from 97, 16.5%. Martin Dwyer, 5 from 35, 14.3%. M Roberts, 5 from 36, 13.9%. R Havlin, 4 from 30, 13.3%. R Hughes, 5 from 38, 13.2%. S Sanders, 6 from 55, 10.9%.

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20/1 Najm Mubeen
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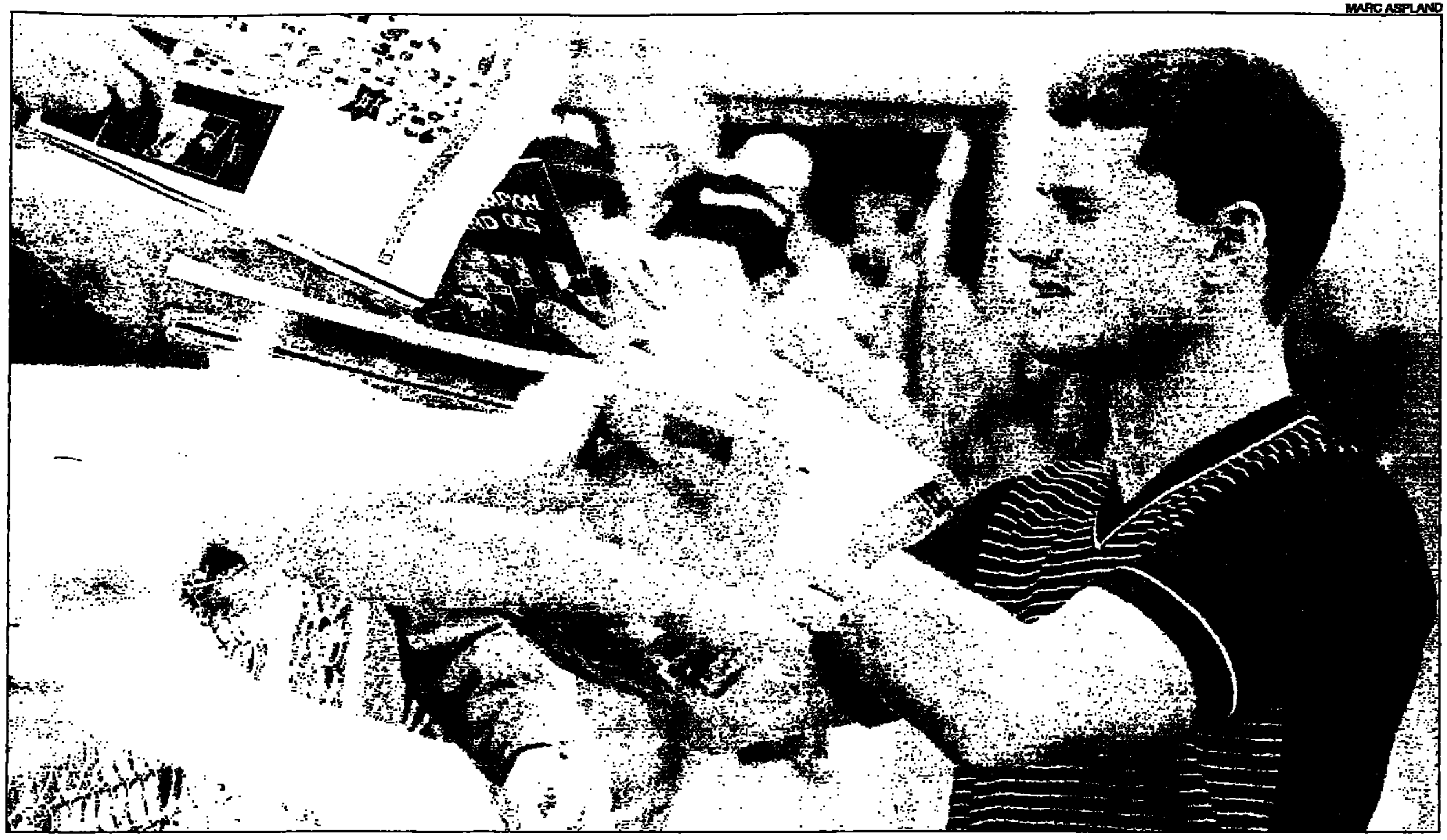


Coulthard stops to sign autographs for some of his many admirers yesterday, on arriving for practice for the British Grand Prix, at Silverstone tomorrow

Coulthard feels he's coming home

Michael Calvin on the weight of expectation surrounding the McLaren driver as he reaches a landmark at Silverstone

It was a slice of rural England, stolen from a chocolate box. A craftsman was renewing the thatched roof of an Elizabethan cottage, set deep in the Oxfordshire countryside. Sunlight stole between mature trees and the air was alive with birdsong. Then, along jogged David Coulthard.

"Good luck for Sunday," the craftsman cried. "Wazzat?" his labourer, who was at the bottom of the ladder, out of sight, asked. "It's that racing driver," came the reply. Coulthard shrugged, waved and sprinted up the hill. Expectation is everywhere.

Tomorrow, at Silverstone, he reaches the landmark of his fiftieth grand prix. As the principal British hope in his home race, he must be all things to all men, and women. Emotion is his enemy, clarity of thought his priority. As he retreats to his country hotel each night, and orders room service, the anticipation that he arouses closes in.

On the drive into Silverstone, Coulthard pulled up at traffic lights on a roundabout over the M40. Four men, towing a caravan in a family saloon, which waited alongside the Scot's top-of-the-range Mercedes, were instantly transformed into schoolboys.

They hung out of the car, waving blue baseball caps that pledged allegiance to Damon Hill. Coulthard laughed, lowered his electric window, and shouted: "You're supporting the wrong bloke. You've got no chance, so don't put any money on him."

At the circuit, a marshal implored him to autograph a photograph for his wife. "How long have you been married?" Coulthard asked. "Too long." It was a typical snatch of small talk, a brief respite from signing silk flags, scraps of paper and lucky racing shoes.

"I liken this to coming home, after you've been travelling for a long time," Coulthard reflected. "You arrive through your front door, and there is an immediate feelgood factor. You dump your bags, kick your shoes off, and put the kettle on.

"There is a special sense of tradition, a real feeling of belonging. I know the marshals, the guys on the gate and the girls in the canteen. I love driving past the sign which says 'Welcome to Silverstone, Home of British Motorsport'. It's all good stick-your-chest-out stuff."

The faces, pressed against the wire fence that separates the paddock glitterati from the public are wistful. They scream the names of passing drivers with a haunting intensity. Coulthard is aware of accusations that the sport is growing away from its audience, but each second of a grand prix weekend is accounted for.

Typically, he barely had time to complete a debriefing session with his engineers after yesterday's free practise session, when a spin left him thirteenth, behind his McLaren team-mate, Mika Hakkinen. A helicopter was waiting to whisk him to a function at Eton College, and on to a subsequent sponsors' cocktail party.

Coulthard said: "You look at the people behind that wire fence and feel amazingly guilty. Effectively, they are the ones who are paying for you to go racing. In a way, given that what you can't see can't bother you, it would almost be better if we had a brick wall, instead of that wire fence.

"I'm not a petrolhead. I'm not car crazy. But I can understand why they do what they do. I remember my first time here, as a spectator. The Ferrari was the first car on the circuit. It was a misty morning and you could hear the noise in the distance before you could see the car. It had something about it.

"It flashed by. When it was gone I just said: 'Wow, that was great.' What is great about that? It was just a car painted red making a loud noise. But, to be there, to smell it as it went by, was worth the hundred-odd quid it cost me."

A racing driver is expected to embody self-reliance. The best instinctively compartmentalise their lives. But, at Silverstone, Coulthard is perpetually ambushed by the humanity which underpins technology. Even in the cockpit, travelling at 195mph, he cannot escape his public.

"You are more aware of the crowd at Silverstone than anywhere else," he said. "It's a sea of people. Not an indistinct crowd, but individual groups, because your eyes are taking in bite-sized chunks of information. On top of that, you have to absorb the noise.

"I can remember driving inside Alesi into Stowe [corner] in 1995. I could actually hear the crowd going 'Aah' above the noise of me changing down. It was the most bizarre thing. Until I realised what the commotion was, I almost stopped driving. It was as if, suddenly, I had become detatched from the car."

Self-control, however, is an essential self-defence mechanism. Despite the provocation of misfortune, most acute when clutch failure robbed him of victory in Montreal last month, Coulthard has forced himself to become a student of human nature. It is a timeless lesson, that gains in importance as a race day unfolds.

"Formula One is the big time, but I've been racing for 15 years," he said. "Throughout that time, I've always tried to hide and control my emotions. If I'm up someone's exhaust pipe, and can see him shaking his head, it tells me he's frustrated. He's mine, because I feel I can force him into a mistake.

"I was disappointed with myself in Canada. I lost the plot completely. I punched the steering wheel, and did all sorts of things I hope never to do again. The emotions might have been natural, but I gave off the wrong signals. Racing is as much in the mind as it is in the physical act of controlling a car.

"That is why I read body language at the drivers' briefing. Who is yawning? Who is relaxed? Who is uptight? I can go into the race with a game-plan. The way a person drives reflects his character — have you ever seen someone who is crazy drive as smooth as silk?

"There are so many things to consider. You change your plan as you go around — when you are braking late, getting the power on early, monitoring the fuel load and checking that your tyres aren't blistered. In the end, we all have to get the job done."

DETAILS FROM SILVERSTONE

PRACTICE TIMES: 1, M Hakkinen (Fin, McLaren-Mercedes) 1min 22.935sec; 2, J Villeneuve (Can, Williams-Renault) 1 23.266; 3, H-H Frentzen (Ger, Williams-Renault) 1:23.327; 4, J Herbert (GB, Sauber-Petronas) 1:23 581, 5, J Alesi (Fr, Benetton-Renault) 1:23 785; 6, G Fisichella (It, Jordan-Peugeot) 1 23 883; 7, M Schumacher (Ger, Ferrari) 1.24.132; 8, A Wurz (Austria, Benetton-Renault) 1:24 203; 9, E Irvine (GB, Ferrari) 1 24 424, 10, J Trulli (It, Prost-Mugen-Honda) 1:24 946; 11, R Schumacher (Ger Jordan-Peugeot) 1 24 948; 12, J Magnussen (Den, Stewart-Ford) 1 25 136, 13, D Coulthard (GB, McLaren-Mercedes) 1 25 360, 14, M Salo (Fin, Tyrrell-Ford) 1:26 035; 15, S Nakano (Japan, Prost-Mugen-Honda) 1:26.270, 16, U Katayama (Japan, Minardi-Hart) 1:26.446; 17, N Fontana (Arg, Sauber-Petronas) 1 26 640; 18, R Barrichello (Br, Stewart-Ford) 1:26 785, 19, P Diniz (Br, Arrows-Yamaha) 1:26.797, 20, D Hill (GB, Arrows-Yamaha) 1 26 810, 21, T Marques (Br, Minardi-Hart) 1 27.066; 22, J Verstappen (Holl, Tyrrell-Ford) 1 27.923

CHAMPIONSHIP POSITIONS (after eight races): Drivers': 1, M Schumacher 47pts; 2, Villeneuve 33, 3, Frentzen 19; 4, Irvine 18, 5 equal, O Panis (Fr, Prost-Mugen-Honda) and Alesi 15. 7, Coulthard 11, 8 equal, G Berger (Austria, Benetton-Renault) and Hakkinen 10; 10, Fisichella 8, 11, Herbert 7; 12, Barrichello 6, 13, R Schumacher 5; 14, Salo 2; 15 equal, N Larini (It, Sauber-Petronas) and Nakano 1. Constructors': 1, Ferrari 65pts, 2, Williams-Renault 52; 3, Benetton-Renault 25; 4, McLaren-Mercedes 21; 5, Prost-Mugen Honda 16; 6, Jordan-Peugeot 13, 7, Sauber-Petronas 8; 8, Stewart-Ford 6; 9, Tyrrell-Ford 2.

GRANDS PRIX TO COME: Tomorrow: British (Silverstone). July 27: German (Hockenheim) Aug 10: Hungarian (Hungaroring) Aug 24: Belgian (Spa-Francorchamps) Sept 7: Italian (Monza). Sept 21: Austrian (A-1 Ring). Sept 28: Luxembourg (Nürburgring) Oct 12: Japanese (Suzuka) Oct 26: European (Jerez).

TELEVISION: ITV: Today: 12 30-2.15pm (qualifying, live), 5 30-5 50 (preview). Tomorrow: 1 0-4 15pm (live); 11.10pm-12.15am (highlights)

Alien activity to be viewed from another world

LYNNE TRUSS

Kicking and Screaming

The excellent thing about motor racing is that it gives the lie to all that Chariots of the Gods nonsense. When people wag their fingers and say: "But why did ancient civilisations make patterns on the ground that could be seen only from outer space?" you can kick a stone and refute them thus: "Ah, but look at the grand prix — that's the same." Which ought to shut them up very nicely.

Because it's true what they say. You stand at a point on the Silverstone track, your face contorted against the grit and noise, and cars hurtle past in an eat-my-dust fashion, too fast for you to check which ones they are. What use is a ground-level perspective on this? None at all. But Martians point a skinny finger at a grand prix and say: "Hey, that's interesting, the red one's been round more times than all the others."

Whether the practice laps yesterday were much use to the drivers, I do not know, but they certainly helped this novice, overheated spectator to realise what she was up against. "What on earth — *nyow, nyow* — is going on here?" I asked myself. To which the only reply was — *nyow* — "Pardon?"

Juggling binoculars, crib-sheet and sandwich, I stood out on a small, turfed mound near the Brooklands corner. This delightful spot, behind the ubiquitous link-fencing, had been found after a lengthy walk through motor-home car parks, along potholed Tarmac and across random patches of scrubby grass. First tip to grand prix visitors: don't wear open-toed sandals.

Silverstone is, basically, a bleak, flat aerodrome, and the best way to traverse it is by jeep, not foot. As I trudged my way into umpteen roped-off dead ends, I became so foot-weary and so envious of anybody on wheeled transport that I considered mugging small children for their bikes.

Possibly, this enforced pedestrianism is all part of a cunning ruse to make the fast car look more attractive (like the traffic jam on the A43, which was so slow it allowed me to complete *The Times* Two crossword while at the wheel of a moving vehicle). But, in fact, it just makes the fast car look even more irritating, because you're hot and worn out.

Only a flea circus is more suspect than Formula One as a spectator sport. Did you see that? No, what? Hang on, it's gone again. And who cares?

So I'm proud to say that, by the end of my first lengthy spectator stint, I had learnt to recognise Damon Hill's blue-and-white Danka job — *nyow* — also Jacques Villeneuve and Johnny Herbert — *nyow, nyow*! This self-taught expertise bears witness to considerable levels of concentration.

The trouble with recognising cars travelling at big speeds is that, when you look up again from your crib-sheet to double-check (yes, No 16!), they've gone. The saving grace, of course, is that they come back round again in a minute and a half.

I have to admit that the nearest thing I had come to motor racing was bewildered possession of a Scalextric set, which I remember mainly for introducing me to the notion of not crying brattishly when the Christmas present turns out not to be a pony. This Scalextric made a big impact in other ways, however: I learnt the peculiar haddocks-bottom smell of faulty wiring and the dire consequences of a transformer burning a hole in a carpet.

In several ways, too, Scalextric stood me in good stead for Silverstone: that aimless way a disappointed child bolts the track-bits together — *clack! clack!* — to make a subtly different shape to a circular track; that annoying din; that mind-numbing lack of variation, as the cars go round and round and occasionally fall off with the wheels spinning; and that frustrating way that the red car always finishes first.

Despite my Scalextricky expertise, the vocabulary takes some getting used to. I keep asking: "And who does Johnny Herbert play for, I mean drive for?" which gives the game away at once.

In motor racing, it turns out that a "team" is two drivers, and not six or seven, as I always imagined. And I heard yesterday that many of the drivers will be concerned with "saving their rubber" this weekend — a useful and graphic phrase that has inexplicably not been adopted in the wider world of metaphor. I've heard of people keeping their powder dry, and sparing their horses. But, from now on, I shall save my rubber, and see if anyone notices.

And what of the drivers, those gods among men? Because the media centre is situated within the famous paddock, one bumps into snake-hipped men in padded racing-suits who are presumably the stars of the show. But, though I saw someone called Mika Hakkinen signing autographs for some frantic fans penned up behind a wire fence (I asked who he was), I have to say that he looked rather ordinary to me.

No special physical type is suited to driving a car, I suppose — not bulging thighs, not being taller or fitter than other people. All their famous magnetism must come from the danger of their job, which is why they are worshipped like Spitfire pilots.

There is a real race tomorrow, at which point the sport may begin to make sense. The striving, the gear changes, the pitstops, the *nyow-nyow*. I'd still rather see it from a flying saucer.

Runner whose mythical feats were reserved for metric mile

SIMON BARNES

On Saturday

TO REWRITE history is one thing: to rewrite mythology quite another. The world of sport will be shattered to hear a claim that Roger Bannister was not, in fact, the first man to run a mile in less than four minutes. That honour, he alleges, should go to Jack Lovelock, of New Zealand, who did it not once but twice and as far back as 1935.

This startling claim comes in a forthcoming book by a chap called Chris Harte, an historian of Australian cricket. The book is the brilliantly titled *A Sportswriter's Year* (clearly a tribute to the book of the same title published in 1989 and written by a chap called Barnes), and is to be published by London Sports Reporting Agency.

Harte claims that Lovelock managed the phenomenal time of 3min 52sec, but kept it dark. He did not want to forewarn opponents for the Olympic Games. Harte duly collected his gold in Berlin in the 1,500 metres. Thus he made sporting history, missing out on mythology.

☐ *Congratulations to Tina and Jouni Jussila, who between them won the traditional Finnish event, the wife-carrying world championship, which was held in Sonkajärvi, in northern Finland, last weekend. Jouni carted his tow-headed lady around a 236-metre obstacle course to claim a world record. Is this a sporting re-enactment of the Viking pursuits of rape and pillage?*

Singling out

More on the A team, the continuing crises of football clubs whose names commence with this most unfortunate of letters. Louis Burgess, old friend of this column, writes to tell me of an oversight: in previous correspondence on this most fascinating of subjects, he forgot about Altrincham. In 1980, the club was denied membership of the Football League by a single vote — because two of its promised supporters within the League were unable to register their votes.

The Grimsby Town representative was inadvertently sitting in the wrong part of the hall to vote, while the Luton Town man got the time of the meeting wrong and arrived a few minutes after the vote. Altrincham would probably be in the League to this day, had events fallen otherwise. What is more, this was the first year a single non-League club had stood for election against four candidates for re-election.

Had Altrincham been elected and done well, which was likely, it is speculated that they would have changed the traditional notion of the League as a closed shop. Other members of the ill-fated A teams are Aberdare, Accrington Stanley, Ashington, Aldershot and Argonauts.

Show piece

Every now and then a humble sporting spectator rises up to claim his 15-minutes-worth and so this column sends its best congratulations to Mitchell Libonati, 27. He made it as guest on the David Letterman Show — because he claims, he found a piece of Evander Holyfield's ear. No doubt there will soon be as many pieces of the aforementioned organ as there are fragments of the True Cross.

Psst... wanna piece of Holyfields ear?
Tony Husband

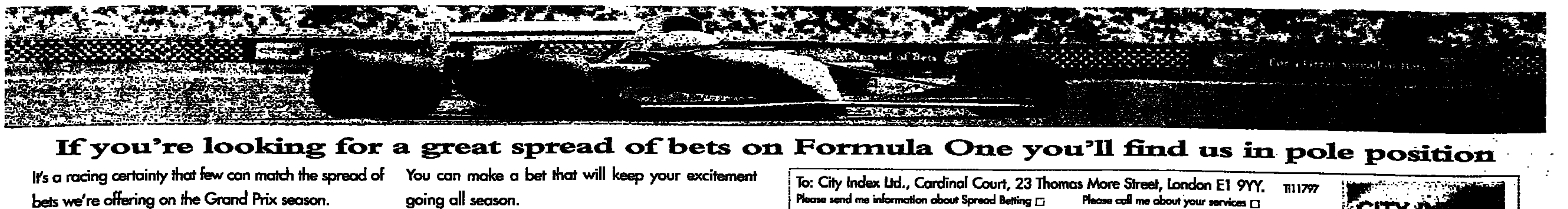
☐ *Fashion note, or as the Silver Surfer of Marvel Comics used to say: "What new and dreadful madness is this?" Newcastle United announce a new away strip: "The mainly navy-coloured away shirt incorporates double vertical panels in fashionable [what?] orange and forest green with an offset Newcastle Brown Ale sponsor's logo. The shirt is complimented [sic] by a traditional ribbed crew neck and cuffs ... the technical fitting [eh?] goalkeeper shirt incorporates orange colouring with psychedelic print offset." The away shirt is a snip for 1p less than forty quid. Away the suckers!*

Birdies galore

Golf courses have been called "the airport lounges of landscape gardening". Their unnatural livid green, their herbicides and their fungicides make them about as natural as an electricity pylon. But, increasingly, golfing people, sensitive to such criticism (and also perhaps sensitive to the pleasures of a more natural environment), have sought to improve matters.

To celebrate this, 12 golf courses on each side of the Atlantic took part in a Europe v United States Ryder Cup competitive bird race: who could see most birds on their golf course? This was organised by David Stubbs, executive director of the European Golf Association Ecology Unit.

Europe scored 217 birds in the 24 hours of the race; the US managed 237 but, under a prearranged handicapping system, finished second. Valderrama, in Spain, managed 48 species and a club near Pamplona managed the spectacular count of 15 birds of prey. True, many of the species recorded do not reflect the conditions of the golf course: the birds were overflying on migration. But it is all splendid stuff, so best greetings from this column to all concerned.



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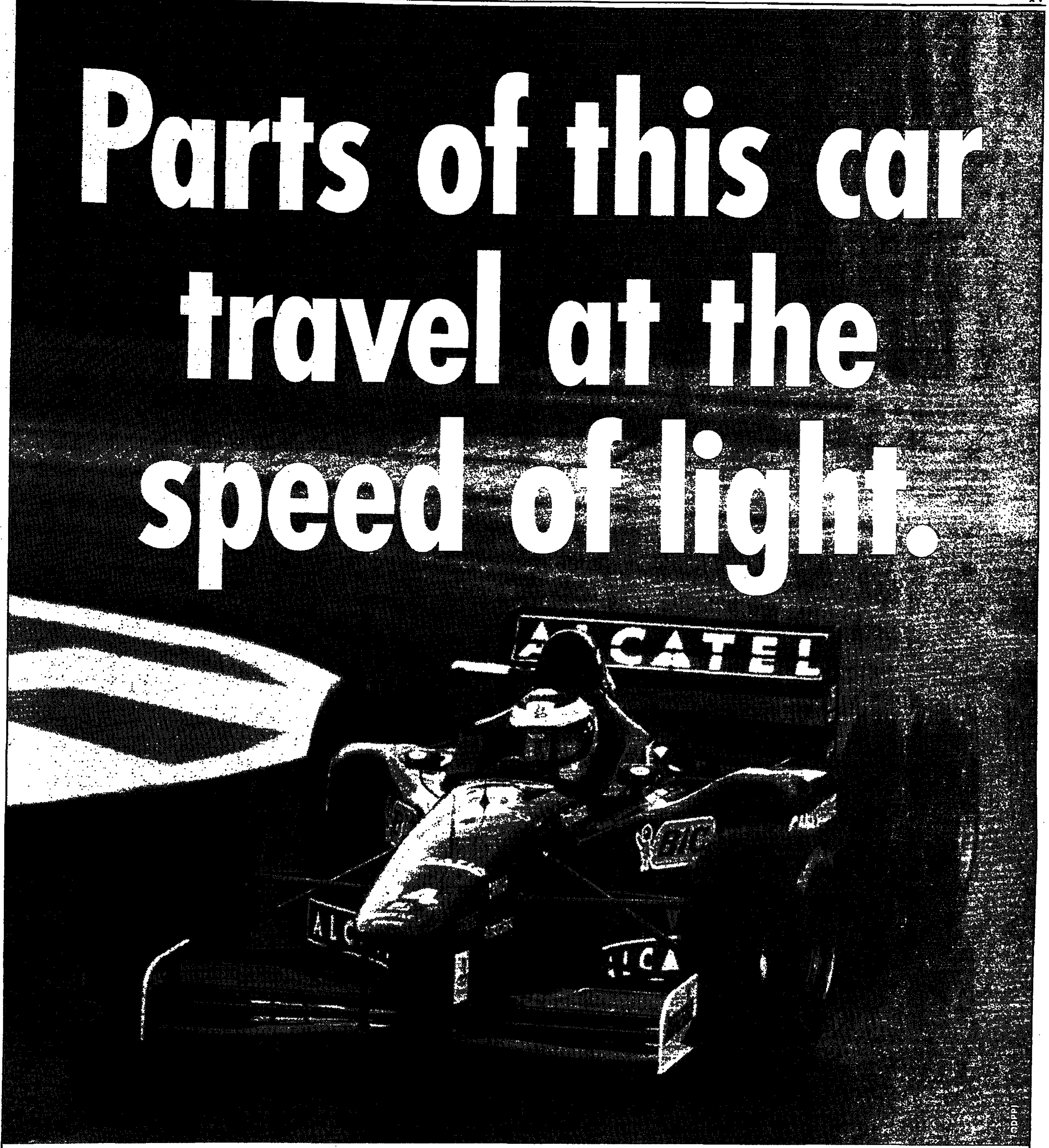

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BOXING

Joking falls flat as Akinwande plots champion's downfall

FROM SRIKUMAR SEN, BOXING CORRESPONDENT, IN LAKE TAHOE

A FEW years ago, a bout between Lennox Lewis and Henry Akinwande would have been considered a mismatch. Indeed, after Akinwande's first contest with Axel Schulz, which was a boring draw, a sharp-witted colleague asked Mickey Duff, who was then Akinwande's manager: "You said that if Akinwande won this fight he would meet Lewis. Did you mean Jerry Lewis?"

That was five years ago. Since then Akinwande has won 17 contests and today the 6ft 7in Dulwich heavyweight will be facing Lennox Lewis, the World Boxing Council champion, here. The joke is now as flat as those opponents Akinwande has knocked out. The challenger is a greatly improved boxer who poses a distinct threat to Lewis.

Whatever the outcome, it is a pairing that will be welcomed by boxing, which is still reeling from the blow dealt by Mike Tyson in Las Vegas two weeks ago. This is the acceptable face of the sport. It is marvellous to think that two Londoners will help to give boxing back some credibility.

Lewis and Akinwande are quiet, retiring types who have refused to engage in slanging matches. When Akinwande was asked by an American reporter if he had any hatred for Lewis, he replied: "No. I only wish him luck."

Akinwande has developed, in the hands of Don Turner, Evander Holyfield's trainer, into a world-class heavyweight. He has an excellent jab and a knockout punch in his right hand. Lewis is a far superior boxer and more experienced but Akinwande's height and awkward style could just embarrass the champion.

Akinwande is favoured by American boxing writers because his victory over Schulz in the second match looked a good result as, subsequently, the German did enough to beat George Foreman but did not get the verdict. Also, the Americans feel that Lewis has looked too apprehensive after his second-round knockout by Oliver McCall three years ago.

Turner said that he expects his man to win because he has fast hands. "All Akinwande has to do is nullify Lewis's right hand and hit him on the chin," he said. "Akinwande throws more punches than any other heavyweight. The other day he was up to 65 punches per round. If he throws the combination that knocked out Jeremy Williams [for the WBO title] forget about Lewis: he will fall, too."

However, there are some question marks over Akinwande. There are doubts whether he can take a punch. None of his 31 opponents has been able to land a clean blow on his chin to show us if he can take it. Also, Akinwande's performance against Scott Welch, who is the worst challenger for the heavyweight title the world has ever seen, causes some concern. Why was he not able to stop such an incompetent challenger? And when Welch made his only serious attempt to hit Akinwande on the chin, the Briton fell back in confusion.

Emanuel Steward, Lewis's trainer, is happy that the Americans favour Akinwande. He said that when Lewis knocks him out they might begin to realise that he is indeed a force to be reckoned with. Steward has, for the last seven weeks, been at Big Bear Lake, California, where Lewis has been training, trying to convince his man that he need not fear Akinwande's power. He has told Lewis that having stood up to blows from Ray Mercer and fought him toe to toe, he has little to fear.

Steward said yesterday that in the last two days he had managed to get Lewis into the kind of aggressive mood needed to beat Akinwande. He said that Lewis would be wearing white trunks and white boots, which would influence the champion to get up on his toes and look lively. The trainer has a theory that black, being a puncher's colour, slows you down. White makes you faster.

"When a fighter has light trunks he feels lighter and flashier. Just like when I put on a tuxedo, I feel conservative. When I put on white shoes and a yellow tie I am ready to go out there and play," he said.

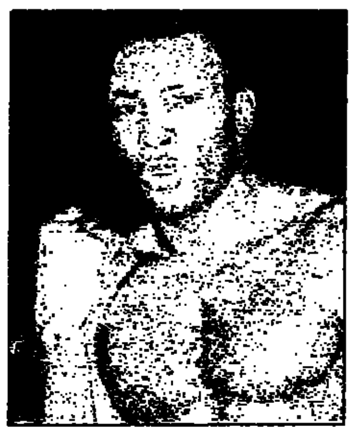
If Steward is right and Lewis does take the initiative, Akinwande could find his combinations too much. Even though Akinwande is awkward and difficult to hit, it needs just one good punch from Lewis to break down his defences and finish him off.

I expect the contest to go in Akinwande's favour for a few rounds until Lewis has found a way round the long, stiff jab. Once inside, Lewis could finish the contest quickly, perhaps in the fifth or sixth round.

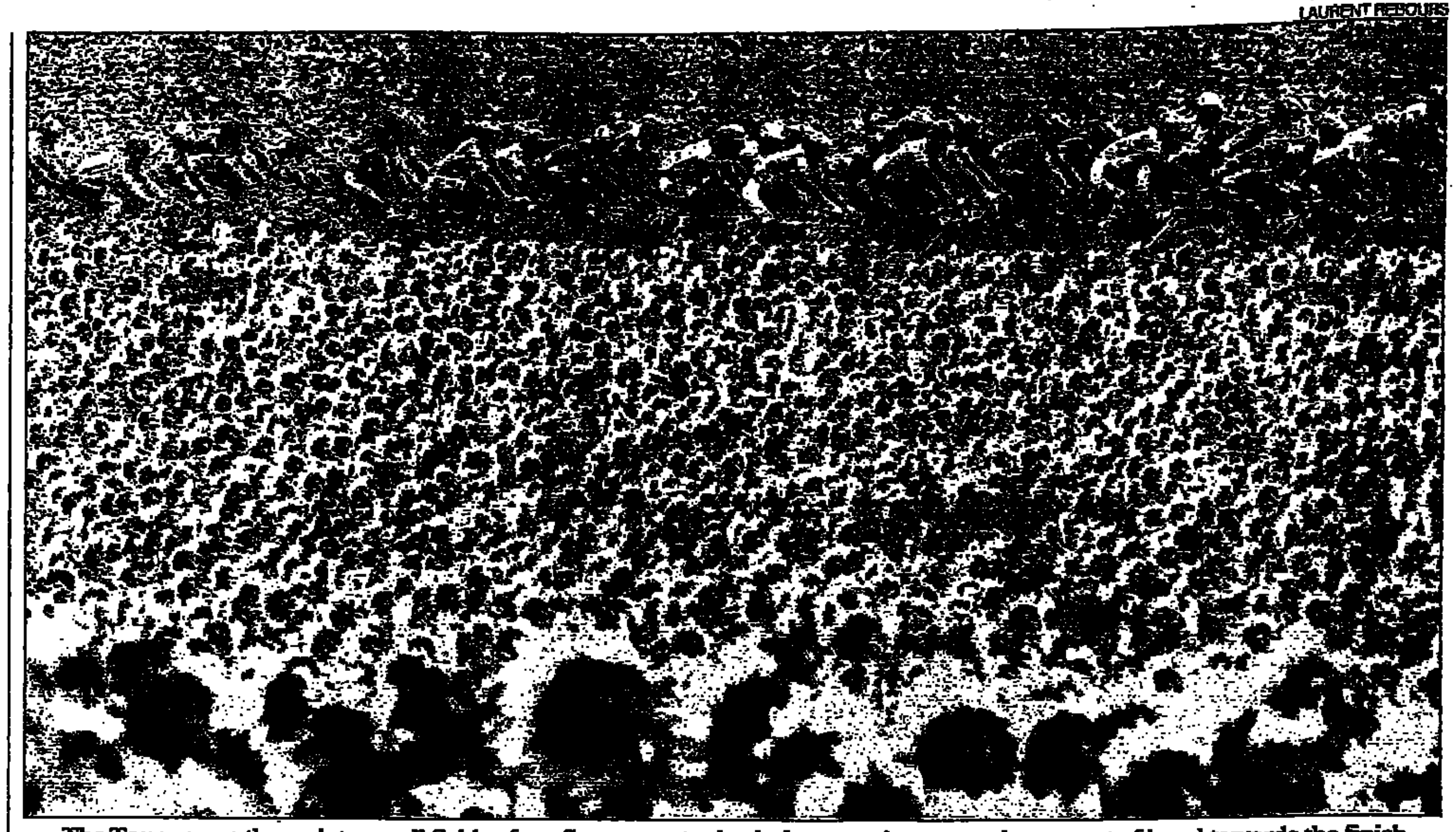
Lewis: in aggressive mood

King promises to stand by his man

DON KING, the boxing promoter, said yesterday that he would stand by Mike Tyson after the heavyweight championship bout two weeks ago in which Tyson bit Evander Holyfield's ears. "I am not making excuses for Mike, but I know him and I know that he's a good human being," King said, breaking his silence on the controversy. "He's my friend and I stand with him. What happened was an aberration, a sad episode that all of us wish could have been avoided."



Akinwande: a distinct threat



LAURENT REBOURS

The Tour passes through tranquil fields of sunflowers yesterday before emotions started to get out of hand towards the finish

Tranquillity descends into violence

FROM JEREMY WHITTLE
IN MARENNES

THE Tour de France was plunged into controversy yesterday evening when Tom Steels, the Belgian national champion and winner this year of four stages in the Paris-Nice race, was disqualified after a dangerous and ill-tempered sprint finish among the salt flats of Marennes on the French Atlantic coast.

Worse, though, followed soon after at a brief press conference when the race jury announced that Djamolidine Abdoujaparov, 33, from Uzbekistan, a past winner of ten stages of the Tour, had failed a doping control after the finish of the second stage at Vire on Monday. As a result, Abdoujaparov, the first rider to post a positive dope test in the Tour in almost a decade, was also ejected from the race.

Steels and Erik Zabel, of Germany, the stage winner, were each fined SFr200 (about £80) and relegated to last place on the stage for irregular and dangerous sprinting, but Steels's conduct in the final 200 metres was also considered dangerous, ending his Tour for this year.

Steels violently hurled a full plastic bottle from his bike at Frederic Moncassin, of France, after apparently being elbowed as he challenged for victory, but was deeply repentant later, saying: "What I did wasn't good for me and wasn't good for cycling, but you have to understand that everything happens in sprints in the heat of the moment. Things happen in the final half-hour in a stage of the Tour de France that you wouldn't believe. People lose sight of what's important and fail to respect each other."

Just ahead of that feud, Zabel had swept dangerously across the finishing straight to box in Jeroen Blijlevens, from Holland, and Robbie McEwan, from Australia, against the crowd barriers.

"I got worked over by Zabel about 200 metres from the line," McEwan said. "I was on his wheel and he just took us all right across the road to the barriers. It virtually brought me to a standstill."

With Steels and Moncassin out of the picture, and Mario Cipollini, the specialist sprinter from Italy, struggling to recapture his form after falling heavily early in the day, Zabel pulled clear by some distance alongside the barriers to cross the line first for what seemed to be the sixth Tour victory of his short professional career.

"There was nothing irregular about the sprint," Zabel said after stepping down from the winner's podium. "I had a little contact with Cipollini, but nothing more than usual."

However, although no rider lodged an official protest, the race judges opted to re-examine the videotape and awarded victory to Blijlevens. "We did not protest," Blijlevens, 25, said. "It was the jury that decided to change the result. It is not the way I like to win, but the jury made a decision and it's fair play."

Although riders have been disqualified from the tour for illicit help in the mountains and for doping infringements in the past, disqualifications for dangerous and violent conduct are virtually unheard of. However, on a day when there were three significant crashes, perhaps it was inevitable that tempers would finally fray.

In sunshine and showers, the Tour headed west towards the Atlantic through the flatlands north of Bordeaux with large crowds lining the route to celebrate the success on Thursday of Cedric Vasseur, the first Frenchman to wear the leader's yellow jersey in this year's race. Vasseur, though, had to survive a nervous day of punctures, crashes and crosswinds.

John Lelangue, of the *Société du Tour de France*, said of the stage disqualifications: "This is very unusual. It is the first time we have disqualified a rider for something like this. Normally it is only for doping offences or for clinging on to team cars in the mountains, but this sort of behaviour is far too dangerous."

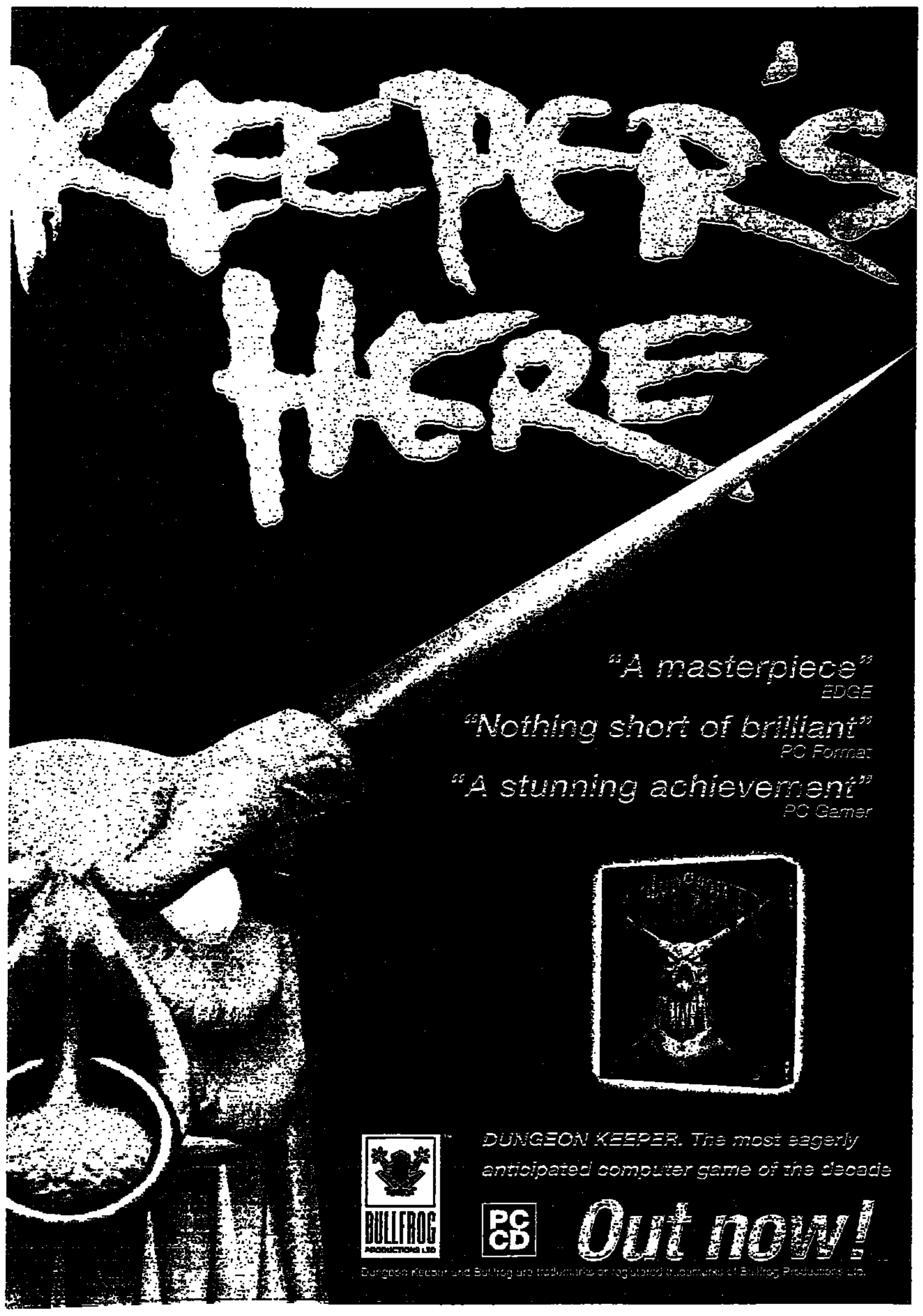
Zabel: disqualified victor

TOUR DE FRANCE DETAILS

SIXTH STAGE (Le Blanc to Marennes, 217.5km): 1, J Blijlevens (Holl, TVM) 5hr 58min 09sec; 2, D Abdujaparov (Uzb, Lotto); 3, M Traversoni (It, Mercatone Uno); 4, N Minali (It, Batik); 5, F Moncassin (Fr, GAN); 6, R McEwen (Aus, Rabobank); 7, F Baldato (It, MG Technogym); 8, D Nazon (Fr, La Francaise des Jeux); 9, M Strazzer (It, Rostotto); 10, F Simon (Fr, GAN); 11, L Genty (Fr, Big Mat Auber); 12, M Cipollini (It, Saeco); 13, C Moreau (Fr, Festina); 14, P Chanteur (Fr, Casino); 15, C Mengin (Fr, La Française des Jeux); 16, M Gualdi (It, Polti); 17, H Vogels (Aus, GAN); 18, C Lamour (Fr, Mutuelle de Seine-et-Marne); 19, L Pillon (Fr, Mutuelle de Seine-et-Marne); 20, L Auger (Fr, Big Mat Auber); 27, C Boardman (GB, GAN); 31, M Sciandri (GB, La Française des Jeux) all same time

LEADING OVERALL POSITIONS: 1, C Vasseur (Fr, GAN) 34hr 12min 44sec; 2, E Zabel (Ger, Telekom) at 2min 09sec; 3, Cipollini at 2:15; 4, Boardman at 2:54; 5, J Ullrich (Ger, Telekom) at 2:56; 6, F Vandenbroucke (Bel, Mapei) at 3:00; 7, S O'Grady (Aus, GAN) at 3:03; 8, Moncassin at 3:04; 9, A Olano (Sp, Banesto) same time; 10, L Jalabert (Fr, ONCE) at 3:06; 50, Sciandri at 5:39. Points classification (green jersey): 1, Zabel 158pts; 2, Cipollini 151; 3, Moncassin 127; 4, Blijlevens 107; 5, Traversoni 82. King of the mountains (polka dot jersey): 1, L Brochard (Fr, Festina) 41pts; 2, C Saugrain (Fr, Cofidis) 11; 3, A Kasputis (Lith, Casino) 10; 4, P Herve (Fr, Festina) 6; 5, Simon 6. Teams: 1, GAN 102hr 43min 52sec; 2, Telekom at 3min 38sec; 3, US Postal Service at 3 42; 4, Mapei at 4:20; 5, Casino at 4:29.

TODAY: Seventh stage: Marennes to Bordeaux (194km).
TOMORROW: Eighth stage: Sauternes to Pau (162km)



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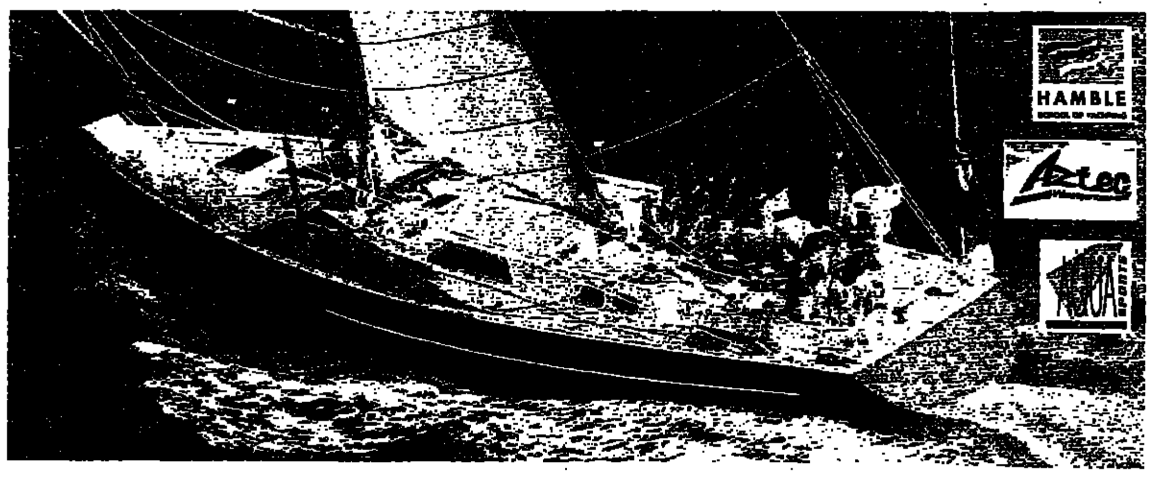

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CHANGING TIMES

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Leg-break bowling could be the feature of play to turn events at Lord's today

Salisbury's chance to re-establish Test claim

Surrey hope that some of Warne's magic will rub off to leave opposition in a spin

The symmetry is appealing. Ian Salisbury and Alan Wells, who both left a disintegrating Sussex side last winter, one to further his ambitions at Surrey, the other snapped up by Kent after his ungracious dismissal as captain — sometimes friends and sometimes foes — come face to face on the big stage at Lord's today.

The big stage is an intriguing place for them to meet, for neither has stood there with comfort. Salisbury's leg spin has been a ready target for predatory batsmen during his staccato international career and Wells's one Test appearance was a failure. Both were on the losing side in the epic NatWest Trophy final of 1993.

"I am looking forward to playing against him [Wells]," Salisbury said. "We have had our differences in the past. We are both strong-willed and stubborn, but respect each other's abilities.

"We fell out for a while over his book" — in it, Wells implied that Salisbury's feet left the ground after he played for England — "but that was three or four years ago. We both grew up. He realised he had made a mistake and I have made mistakes myself in our relationship. The game is too short not to forgive."

Wells will be one of several Kent batsmen ready to get after Salisbury, whose handling of the pressure will be monitored by those who nurture hopes of England fielding an effective leg spinner in the near future. David Lloyd, the national coach, spoke passionately at Old Trafford earlier this week about the need for this to happen and Salisbury remains the likeliest candidate.

Salisbury concedes that he felt burdened by the knowledge that he was joining Surrey as the club's only spinner, but has worked hard to strengthen his game and silence the behind-the-hand sniggers about him being a "one four-ball an over" man.

Guidance and inspiration has come from an unlikely source in Terry Jenner, the former Australia leg spinner and Shane Warne's guru. At the instigation of David Gilbert, the Surrey coach, Jenner was flown to Cape Town to work with Salisbury during pre-season training and he has stayed in touch.

"Terry has been fantastic," Salisbury said. "I last saw him two weeks ago. He watched me bowl against Durham in the NatWest Trophy and we had a session in the nets the next day. He would not let me bowl a googly because he said I bowled too many. He also worked on my loop, which lets you get away with length a lot more." A few days later, Salisbury turned in match-winning figures of six for 19 against Nottinghamshire.

Salisbury was then coming back from an injury to his spinning finger that had spoilt his early weeks of the season. Going for a catch in the deep, he damaged ligaments and tendons in the finger, which is still swollen. "As Terry explained, your spinning finger is your lifeline," Salisbury said. "If something happens to it, you could be finished."

Naturally, Salisbury has not given up hope of playing for England again. At 27, he may be only four months younger than Warne, and boast only 18 Test wickets to Warne's 252, but hopes, reasonably enough, for another seven years at the top.

"I know what is needed to get back into the England frame," he said. "I must bowl not just well but consistently well. On my day, I can be as effective as Warne. When I get the chance to bowl last in a Test on a turning wicket and defending a big target, then you can judge me."

Free of injury, Salisbury will have never had it so good. He plays for a high-profile club and one that is prepared, since the signing of Saqlain Mushtaq, the Pakistan off spinner, to produce pitches that turn and bounce. "We are working well together," Salisbury said. "Saqlain keeps it tight and gives me a free rein to do what I like at other end."

On the eve of his second Lord's final, Salisbury remembers the disappointments of the first. "Warwickshire played magnificently and for the next two years had a brilliant time, while for Sussex things went in the opposite direction," he said. "Whoever wins out of me and Wells today, at least one of us will have won one and lost one."

Simon Wilde

SURREY'S PATH TO FINAL

GROUP MATCHES: April 28 (h): lost to Kent by four wickets. April 30 (a): beat Gloucestershire by three wickets. May 2 (h): beat British Universities by six wickets. May 5 (a): beat Hampshire by 165 runs. May 12 (h): beat Sussex by 11 runs.

QUARTER-FINAL: May 27 (a): beat Essex by six wickets.

SEMI-FINAL: June 10 (h): beat Leicestershire by 130 runs.

BEN RADFORD / ALLSPORT

Salisbury has a classic leg-spin action that is thriving at the Oval

CLIVE MASON / ALLSPORT

Strang's aggression has been the key to his success as a bowler

Strang prepares to go on the attack

Kent look to Zimbabwe's finest to add to a reputation built on impressive performances against England last winter

After his success against England in the winter, Paul Strang was described by David Houghton, the Zimbabwe coach, as the fourth-best leg-spinner in the world. Considering that Shane Warne, Mushtaq Ahmed and Anil Kumble were the men Houghton ranked above him, that is not quite the put-down it appears.

Certainly, few people queried the wisdom of Kent when they turned to Strang, 26, as their overseas replacement for Carl Hooper. Canterbury is a fitting venue for him to ply his trade, a ground where Tich Freeman and Doug Wright, two of the greatest English leggies this century, are remembered fondly. Strang has not disappointed. As well as claiming 34 wickets so far this season, he has scored three half-centuries from the lower order as Kent press for their first county championship title since 1978.

That is for the longer term. At Lord's today, his personal duel with Surrey's assortment of strokemakers will be the most compelling attraction of the Benson and Hedges Cup final and, possibly, the defining period of play. The exploits of Brown, Stewart and the Hollioake brothers are well documented, yet Strang, in taking 12 wickets in the previous rounds, has quietly conceded an average of just 3.26 runs an over. Something has to give, and Strang is no shrinking violet.

"I could never be a bowler who just contains, whether it is one-day or four-day cricket," Strang said. "I always attack. Every over I try to get a wicket, but sometimes success comes through getting inside the heads of batsmen and just tormenting them."

Away from confrontation, this aggression is replaced by a more modest disposition and a willingness to learn. Warne, Mushtaq and Richie Benaud are among those whose brains have been picked as he seeks to add consistency and variety to his stock leg break.

He said: "In Zimbabwe, there are two first-class sides, Mashonaland and Matabeleland. So to come to England and play 17 four-day games within six months is a huge opportunity. Even if I just take 40 wickets and score 400 runs, it will have been worthwhile. People expect me to be a more dangerous bowler as the season wears on and the pitches become harder, but I hope they will remember that this is a long season for me and I will be very tired by the end."

His game was forged as his father traversed the country as an officer in the Rhodesian police force. Ron Strang, later to become a first-class umpire, taught him the rudiments of the game in gardens at the back of their various homes. Yet it was only when Peter Carlstein, a former South Africa Test player, paid a visit to Cecil John Rhodes school in Gweru that Strang, then aged ten, was introduced to the science of wrist spin.

At university in Cape Town, he came under the tutelage of Duncan Fletcher. Now coach at Glamorgan, Fletcher had enshrined himself in Zimbabwean folklore when he led his country to success against Australia in a World Cup game at Trent Bridge in 1983. He felt that Strang had the ability even in his late teens to embark on a career in South Africa. The prospect of appearing on the United Nations' blacklist discouraged such a course and Strang waited instead until 1993 before making his first-class debut in his native land.

By then, he was working in the marketing department of a timber firm, whose management was sympathetic to the increasing demands on his cricket. Indeed, he did not leave Border Timbers until after the 1996 World Cup, three years after his Test debut against Sri Lanka.

He became contracted to the Zimbabwe board last August and rewarded the faith of his authority within two months by taking five wickets in an innings against Sri Lanka and completing a maiden Test century against Pakistan. Then came the series against England. He claimed ten wickets in the two drawn tests, including five for 123 in 59 overs in the first innings of the thrilling game in Bulawayo.

"To hold England was very, very significant," he said. "We knew we would get a lot of coverage, so it was a big chance for us to promote the game in Zimbabwe. We managed to get free television links, which meant the locals could watch us. The black people saw us being successful and, by the end of the one-day series [which Zimbabwe won 3-0], a lot of the kids were playing in the streets. Our performances showed to the world that we will not be forgotten."

His own signing for Kent generated much interest in Zimbabwe and he appreciates the importance of performing through the summer, particularly in bigger games such as the final today, to maintain the profile of the sport during an otherwise quiet period.

"We are at a watershed. It will take a lot of unsung work from administrators if we are to continue to penetrate the black communities in Zimbabwe," he said. "White people make up only about one per cent of the population, so you have to learn to live together. Soccer is the first game for the black people, but they are natural athletes and pick up sport very quickly. But it must be long term. Nobody I coach in the immediate future is going to bowl for Zimbabwe. It will be his son or even grandson, brought up in an atmosphere of cricket."

Richard Hobson

KENT'S PATH TO FINAL

GROUP MATCHES: April 28 (a): beat Surrey by four wickets. April 30 (h): beat Hampshire by two wickets. May 2 (h): beat Sussex by six wickets. May 5 (h): beat British Universities by four wickets. May 12 (a): v Gloucestershire Match abandoned.

QUARTER-FINAL: May 27 (h): beat Warwickshire by four wickets.

SEMI-FINAL: June 10 (h): beat Northamptonshire by 66 runs.

ROWING

Britain pull away in World Cup pursuit

From Mike Rosewell
Rowing Correspondent
in Lucerne

THE Great Britain coxless four of Steve Redgrave, Matthew Pinsent, Tim Foster and James Cracknell cannot fail to win the World Cup in their boat class. First place in their heat here yesterday assured them direct passage to the final tomorrow, when even sixth place will make them unassailable.

Not that sixth place looks likely. Pinsent eased his colleagues home ahead of Germany. Even so, the time was one second faster than the other heat, in which a more frantic Romania finished ahead of France and Italy. The only surprise for the British was that they trailed Poland at 500 metres, reached in a purported 1min 18sec, although this time, and that given for 1,000 metres, was queried by them after the race.

Bob Thatcher and Ben Hunt-Davis, Britain's other World Cup leaders, still have it all to do in the coxless pairs. They won with something to spare to reach the semi-finals today but the crew is not complacent. "Whoever wins out of us, France, Croatia and Lithuania can win the World Cup," Hunt-Davis said. Croatia were one of Britain's victims yesterday.

Guin Batten, the Great Britain woman sculler, experienced kinder "seeding" yesterday than she did in Paris and took advantage, qualifying in first place. Greg Searle, Britain's Henley-winning sculler, was less fortunate, coming up against Iztok Cop, of Slovenia, the world champion and World Cup winner. Searle finished in second place and faces a repechage today.

The women's coxless pair of Dot Blackie and Cath Bishop and the double scull of Gillian Lindsay and Miriam Batten will face repechages today, too, but their prospects look good. Both found themselves in the fastest heats yesterday, finishing second and third respectively.

Tracy Langlands and Sarah Birch, survivors of recent women's lightweight trials, made a first international appearance in the lightweight doubles, achieving second to book a semi-final place.

Unlike their heavyweight colleagues, however, they were in the slowest heat. The Britain heavyweight eight had a tense wait for their evening heat after racing was halted in the late afternoon because of one of Lucerne's spectacular storms. The British found themselves up against Australia, unbeaten since their appearance in Europe three weeks ago. Britain could not break the trend.

The British lightweight eight, fresh from their nail-biting Henley success, cruised to a win, and direct passage to the final, in their heat yesterday. Jason Keys, the stroke, appeared to have his men under control and John Deakin, the ebullient cox who won two Henley medals, was saving his inspirational energy.

MCC celebrate the bridging of big gap

By Barney Spender

SHENLEY PARK (final day of three): MCC beat Pakistan A by ten wickets

MEMBERS of MCC do not usually need an excuse to blow the top off a bottle of champagne, but they were given one yesterday anyway when the club recorded its first first-class victory since beating Essex, the champion county, at the start of the 1984 season.

But while the game's founding club had cause to celebrate, there was a touch of concern for the touring team who, after a defeat by Derbyshire, have now lost two games in succession.

"It's always disappointing to lose but we were up against a good team and I think the performance graph is improving," Agha Zahid, the Pakistani coach, said.

Discipline was certainly the missing factor when they allowed themselves to be bowled out for 119 on the first morning. They did, however, keep the game going until just before lunch on the final day.

In mitigation, the Asia Cup tournament has deprived them of an experienced core, making this a development tour more than anything else. "It is a very young side with very little experience of first-class cricket and none at all of English conditions. Hopefully, by the time they leave, they will be better players and closer to the step up to Test cricket," Zahid said.

Of the players on show, Shoaib Akhtar, the feisty 21-year-old fast bowler from Rawalpindi, who took five for 64 in the MCC first innings, looks the prime candidate for the move up.

MCC bowlers, led by Hamish Anthony, who had match figures of ten for 115, took the last five wickets to allow Asif Din and Mark Lavender to knock off the 15 runs required before lunch.

PAKISTAN A: First Innings 119 (Saim Elahi 53; H A G Anthony 5 for 34).

Second Innings

Ali Naqvi c G W Flower b Badenhorst	114
Saim Elahi c Francis b Jeh	34
Rana Qayyum lbw b Anthony	1
Hasan Raza b Badenhorst	15
*Mohammad Wasim lbw b Anthony	10
Mujahid Jamshed c Lavender b Jeh	12
†Javed Qadir lbw b Jeh	0
Azhar Mahmood c Lavender b Anthony	31
Irfan Fazil c Garaway b Anthony	11
Ali Husan Rizvi c Anthony b Badenhorst	5
Shoaib Akhtar not out	2
Extras (b 1, lb 4, w 1, nb 16)	22
Total	257

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-82, 2-96, 3-134, 4-158, 5-187, 6-187, 7-231, 8-239, 9-253.

BOWLING: Francis 10-2-20-0; Anthony 25-6-79-4; Badenhorst 20-6-48-3; Foley 19-5-53-0; Jeh 12-3-37-3; Arthurton 3-1-5-0; G W Flower 5-1-10-0.

MCC: First Innings 382 (K L T Arthurton 200 not out, G W Flower 78; Shoaib Akhtar 5 for 64, Azhar Mahmood 4 for 90).

Second Innings

Asif Din not out	12
M P Lavender not out	6
Total (no wkt)	18

BOWLING: Shoaib Akhtar 1.3-0-12-0; Azhar Mahmood 1-0-6-0.

Umpires: P Willey and M R Benson.

GRAHAM MORRIS

Leading lights: Lord's hosted a rare gathering yesterday, as all nine captains of the Test-playing countries convened to debate the current issues of the game. Their recommendations will be put before the inaugural meeting today of the new cricket committee of the International Cricket Council at a West End hotel.

The Test captains have only met formally once before, during the political imbroglio that preceded the World Cup 18 months ago, and the timing and venue of the meeting yesterday gave them a more relaxed opportunity to present their case on a variety of concerns confronting the game today.

High on the captains' agenda was the volume of international cricket now being played around the world. In 1996, 41 Test matches were staged, along with 111 one-day internationals, of which Pakistan, astonishingly, took part in 42.

Views on the imminent establishment of a world championship for Test cricket, and on the future structure and frequency of the World Cup, were also being sought. Other subjects included the extended use of television replays to adjudicate on the validity of catches and an Australian proposal that grounds with floodlights should be free to use them to expedite play in Test cricket during periods of poor light.

The captains are, from the left, back row: Hansie Cronje (South Africa), Wasim Akram (Pakistan), Alistair Campbell (Zimbabwe), Courtney Walsh (West Indies), Stephen Fleming (New Zealand). Front: Sachin Tendulkar (India), Mark Taylor (Australia), Michael Atherton (England), Arjuna Ranatunga (Sri Lanka).

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GOLF: MONTGOMERIE AMONG THE OBJECTORS AS SLOW PLAY MARS THIRD ROUND AT LOCH LOMOND

Rocca rolls past rest's rhythm blues

By John Hopkins
Golf Correspondent

ROSS KINNAIRD / ALLSPORT

Lehman, of the United States, retained his lead after three rounds of the Loch Lomond World Invitational. He went round in 67 yesterday

WHEN your income leaps from £135 per month to £9,200, life, as well as the bank balance, takes on a different complexion. When you grip a golf club for hours each day instead of placing your hands in chemicals, it is easy to appreciate how things have taken a turn for the better.

This is what has happened to Costantino Rocca, and so some of the complaints of other golfers hardly register with him. This is an Italian who remembers what it was like when he worked for a pittance in a factory near Bergamo 20 years ago.

For example, the slow play that has dogged competitors at Loch Lomond in the Gulfstream World Invitational has caused Colin Montgomerie considerable distress — and rightly so.

"We have lost the whole idea of three-hour rounds," Montgomerie said after taking one hour and 47 minutes to play six holes and 2½ hours for nine. "We have got to do something about it and police the situation better."

It has not bothered Rocca, however. Not even when he birdied two successive holes and then had to wait for 40 minutes on the next tee — because he and Retief Goosen were playing in a two-ball amid a field full of three-balls — did it bring anything like a furrow to the Rocca brow. He is the most balanced of men.

"I am better known in Britain, Germany, America, everywhere than I am in Italy," Rocca said, laughing. "Golf is still not popular in Italy."

He is doing his best to remedy that situation by being one of the steadiest and most successful golfers in Europe. The man who earned £1,500 in his last year at that factory took home more than £500,000 in winnings from the European Tour last year.

His 66 yesterday, which took him to six under par, is another step back to the sort of form that he demonstrated earlier in the year, though he remains a long way behind Tom Lehman, the tournament leader, who is 15 under par, two strokes ahead of Pierre Fulke.

Until the end of May, Rocca was on target for his third appearance in the Ryder Cup. He is technically very sound, as Bernard Gallacher pointed out, and that is why he is so consistent. "His swing will last and last," Gallacher remarked.

Then, however, Rocca injured a shoulder in Germany and, last week, he hurt a rib in Ireland. "When I hurt my shoulder, I could not swing back," Rocca, who is ninth in the Ryder Cup table and needs a couple more substantial pay days to confirm his place in Severiano Ballesteros's team for Valderrama, said. "Now I have hurt my ribs, I cannot swing through."

There is nothing much the matter with Montgomerie's backswing or downswing. It is his temperament that sometimes seems a little frail. Ernie Els, who played with Montgomerie, remarked that the Scotsman seemed to be getting a bit out of rhythm at the slowness of play over their front nine holes.

Perhaps this was why Montgomerie had a relatively lacklustre 70 to be four under par on a day when scoring was very low. Mark James had a 65, as did Els. Peter Hedblom and Lee Westwood had 66s while Payne Stewart came home in 30. On a day when the second round had to be completed before the third round could begin, Fulke played 27 holes in nine under par.

The only drawback to staging an event the week before the Open is that there is a slightly false air about it. Such an event is not so much "after the Lord Mayor's Show" as before it.

"Perhaps I am thinking about next week too much," Montgomerie said. "I am not putting very well and, yes, I think I have one eye on Troon. It is hard to take this event in isolation. I am playing well overall and I am happy about that."

Els pointed out that, in the United States, players are not warned before they are penalised for slow play and play "does seem to be more brisk over there". He said he thought that a one or two-stroke penalty was tougher than a financial penalty. "A lot of players can pay $500, but putting one stroke on their score is a different matter," he said.

Slow play is one of the bugbears of the European Tour at the moment. The players do not like it because it disrupts their rhythm. It is no fun for spectators, either. It also plays havoc with television schedules, and, these days, that is an increasingly important consideration. It is high time that the Tour got to grips with it.

THIRD ROUND

Great Britain and Ireland unless stated

198: T Lehman (US) 65, 66, 67. 200: P Fulke (Swe) 70, 64, 66. 202: S Jones (US) 69, 65, 68 204: E Els (SA) 70, 69, 65 205: G Norman (Aus) 68, 68, 69; P Curry 63, 72, 70 206: P Stewart (US) 73, 67, 66, A Cabrera (Arg) 67, 72, 67, G Day (US) 66, 72, 68; P Broadhurst 68, 70, 68; M Gronberg (Swe) 68, 69, 69; J Haeggman (Swe) 63, 72, 71. 207: C Rocca (It) 70, 71, 66, P O'Malley (Aus) 71, 68, 68; T Purtzer (US) 68, 69, 70 208: J Rask (Swe) 70, 70, 68; M James 72, 71, 65 209: J Parnevik (Swe) 70, 71, 68; T Bjorn (Den) 72, 67, 70; C Montgomerie 69, 70, 70; L Mize (US) 70, 69, 70; M Hallberg (Swe) 67, 71, 71, P Hedblom (Swe) 73, 70, 66: L Westwood 70, 73, 66; S Field 68, 68, 73 210: R Goosen (SA) 71, 70, 69; D Cooper 71, 70, 69; A Coltart 73, 69, 68; R Allenby (Aus) 68, 72, 70; J Sandelin (Swe) 67, 72, 71, D Tapping 71, 67, 72; D Robertson 71, 72, 67. 211: P McGinley 72, 69, 70; P Mitchell 69, 72, 70: P-U Johansson (Swe) 72, 71, 68; R Rafferty 69, 68, 74 212: J Hawkes (SA) 72, 70, 70; W Westner (SA) 72, 70, 70; R Russell 70, 70, 72; C Suneson (Sp) 70, 70, 72; N Faldo 67, 73, 72; D Clarke 72, 68, 72; M A Jiménez (Sp) 69, 73, 70. 213: H Clark 72, 70, 71; E Canonica (It) 72, 70, 71; P Eales 68, 74, 71, S Ames (Trin) 70, 72, 71; R Boxall 71, 72, 70

Rose and Moodie lead Scots into last four

SCOTLAND easily overcame England to reach the semi-finals of the European women's team championship at the Nordcenter Club, in Finland, yesterday. Wales also moved into the last four, for only the third time, while Spain, the defending champions, lost their title.

Scotland, the runners-up in Milan two years ago, laid the foundations for their victory by winning both foursomes, but did so only by a whisker after seeing three-hole advantages at the turn disappear.

Alison Rose, the British champion, and Hilary Monaghan came through at the 19th after Elaine Ratcliffe and Karen Stupples, the Curtis Cup pair, three-putted, while Janice Moodie and Lesley Nicholson emerged as winners on the 18th green. It was then plain sailing as Rose and Moodie won their singles to ensure victory. Scotland now meet France, who beat Spain.

Wales were celebrating last night after securing a rare matchplay victory in these championships. Having been in the semi-finals on only three previous occasions, it was a particular delight for them to defeat Denmark 4-3 and set up a meeting today with Sweden, who recovered from a 2-0 foursomes deficit to defeat Italy.

Wales and Denmark shared the foursomes, but victory on the final green by Eleanor Pilgrim over Camilla Faaborg-Andersen, who was forced to take a penalty drop when her drive found thick grass beside a fairway rock, set up the success for Wales. The other two points came from Natalee Evans and Vicki Thomas, 42, a veteran campaigner of the past 12 championships.

Neumann puts back clock with opening onslaught

From Patricia Davies in Portland, Oregon

LISELOTTE NEUMANN was the one who started it all, the first great player to roll off the Swedish production line that churns out champions the way Wales used to conjure up stand-off halves.

Neumann, 31, succeeded Laura Davies as the US Women's Open champion in 1988 to inspire a generation of Swedes and, in the 52nd Women's Open here at Pumpkin Ridge, with Annika Sorenstam, the defending champion, suffering, Neumann was reminding everyone that the magic was still there.

She worked ferociously on her game — this is her sixth tournament in a row — in preparation for this event and a first round of 67, four under par, which equalled her best score in an Open, was the result.

On a damp, difficult day, she did not drop a shot and led by a stroke from a trio of Americans, Deb Richard, Susie Redman and Kelly Robbins, and Se Ri Pak, a superstar in South Korea but just starting to make people take notice elsewhere.

Yesterday, with the weather still overcast and fickle early on, Neumann resumed in the same vein, with birdies at the 1st and 3rd, to move to six under par, two strokes ahead of Richard and Alison Nicholas, of England, who went out in 33, three under.

Before the off, Nicholas said that she found the Witch Hollow course long and tough, but produced a first round of 70 that included birdies at the 9th (where Sorenstam, who had an opening round of 77, took a triple-bogey seven), 10th and 12th and two bogeys, at the 6th and 17th.

At the 12th, a picturesque but tricky par-three of 127 yards, Nicholas hit the flag with an eight-iron and ended eight feet away. Mark Fulcher, her caddie, was certain that he was about to collect $1,500 from the hole-in-one pool but had to be content with the birdie two instead.

Opens are about patience and Nicholas, Neumann and Trish Johnson, whose only blemish in a round of 69 was a double-bogey seven at the last, the result of a bad drive and an amateurish top into a wetlands hazard in front of her nose, embodied such a quality.

Johnson is not always the soul of patience but even the disappointing finish did not upset her unduly. "I hardly made a bad swing for 16 holes and there's no point in dropping your head and pretending you're upset. The only thing you don't do on the first day of the Open is play yourself out of contention, really, and two under par is there," she said.

Sorenstam refused to write herself out of the reckoning, despite her worst round of the year — she could not remember the last time she had gone out in 41, to be five over par for nine holes. Susie Berning won in 1972 after starting with a 79, so all is not lost. Sorenstam faced the massed cameras and fulfilled her press obligations with class and charm. "I haven't given up yet," she said. "I know how to play this golf course and I'm not going to leave here until I beat it."

Nicholas: patience

Laura Davies, who had a 75, tried to be similarly bullish but was less convincing. "I had two double-bogeys and if I can cut those out and get back to par by Sunday, I'll probably have half a chance," she said. But she added that her confidence was at its lowest ebb for several years — she did not dare to use her driver and was struggling with her long irons.

The ray of hope was that her putting was much improved — 28 putts only — thanks to a tip that she was moving too much on her stroke. "I concentrated on keeping my left side still and it worked," she said. Now for the driving tip.

ATHLETICS

Heel injury rules ailing Edwards out of key trials

By David Powell, Athletics Correspondent

WHILE Jonathan Edwards won his world title in Gothenburg two years ago as the climax to a fabulous spell of record-breaking triple jumping, he will have to defend it from a position of questionable competitive fitness. Edwards withdrew yesterday from the three-day Great Britain trials for the world championships in Athens, which began last night.

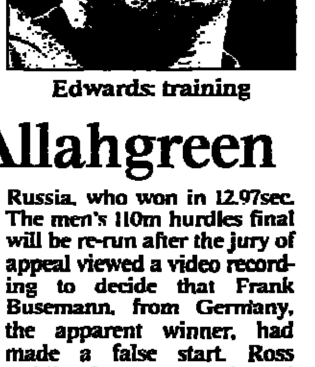
The heel injury that Edwards sustained while winning his event at the European Cup in Munich three weeks ago has not cleared yet. Although the selection criteria for Athens demands that athletes who wish to be picked take part in their chosen event at the trials, the "exceptional circumstances" rule will be employed to name Edwards in the team next week.

Edwards, 31, was Britain's only gold medal winner in Gothenburg and was runner-up to Kenny Harrison, of the United States, at the Olympic Games last year. The exceptional circumstances relating to him here are that he has produced a doctor's note saying that, while he is fit to train, he is not able to compete.

Steve Calvert, a Great Britain team doctor, informed the British Athletic Federation (BAF) yesterday, that "competitive activity was inadvisable," according to Jayne Pearce, the BAF spokeswoman. Two years ago, Edwards withdrew from the trials citing injury but, two days later, set a world record in Salamanca, Spain. There will be no repeat of the controversy.

A spokesman for the Salamanca meeting, which is on Monday, confirmed yesterday that Edwards had withdrawn. Whereas in 1995 Edwards set a succession of British and world records, and wind-aided world bests, prior to Gothenburg, he faces going to Athens with only three competitions behind him, and seven jumps, in the preceding seven weeks.

Malcolm Arnold, Britain's performance director, who had spoken with Edwards, said that the athlete "is worried it is not going away as fast as he had hoped". Explaining how Edwards had been able to train but not compete, Arnold said: "When he lands in competition, he is taking something like six to eight times his own body weight on that heel whereas, in training, he can do weights and sprint without putting the full force through it."



Edwards: training

Although Edwards will be short of competition going into Athens, he can at least reflect on his European Cup-winning jump of 17.74 metres, which remains the longest in the world this year.

Edwards and Roger Black are the only two luminaries missing from the trials, from which between 70 and 80 athletes will book their tickets for Athens. Black's selection is less certain because his event, the 400 metres, is the most competitive in Britain. If three men run well inside 45 seconds, there may be no place for him.

The first two are guaranteed selection, the third athlete in each event chosen at the discretion of the selectors. Steve Backley, who has missed meetings in Stockholm and Oslo in the past week, is fit to return in the javelin.

Backley had been suffering swollen glands but is now keen to return to competition. "Having had a two-week break will not be a bad thing going into the trials," Backley said. "I will be perfect happy going to Athens not having competed a lot. The rest may prove a blessing in disguise."

Mick Hill may fancy his chances of scoring a rare victory over Backley. While Backley may be slightly ring-rusty, Hill was second in Stockholm on Monday, throwing in excess of 85 metres and finishing ahead of Jan Zelezny, the world and Olympic champion.

Silver for Allahgreen

DIANE ALLAHGREEN staked her claim for a place in the Great Britain team for the world championships in Athens next month when she won the silver medal in the 100 metres hurdles at the European under-23 championships in Turku, Finland, yesterday. Allahgreen, from Liverpool, was beaten by 0.06sec by Irina Korotoya, of Russia, who won in 12.97sec. The men's 110m hurdles final will be re-run after the jury of appeal viewed a video recording to decide that Frank Busemann, from Germany, the apparent winner, had made a false start. Ross Baillie, from Scotland, and Damian Greaves, a Newham and Essex Beagle, finished fifth and eighth respectively.

SPORTS LETTERS

Day-night cricket worth a run

From Mr Jim Cumbes

Sir, We were disappointed to read Michael Henderson's comments on the day-night cricket match at Old Trafford between Lancashire and Yorkshire (Line and Length, June 26).

Surely with the World Cup less than two years away in this country, now is not a bad time to see if floodlit cricket can work. If not, well we tried. Hyping the game up is done merely to emphasise the difference of this type of game and to try to widen the game's audience. After all, are we not supposed to be in the entertainment business and not just a private gentlemen's club?

Day Night Promotions is a one-man company, formed by a great cricket enthusiast, Mohan Kripalani, who, it is true, is based in London. His fanaticism on cricket embraces all forms, including four-day championship as well as five-day Test cricket, but, inspired by what he has seen in Australia and more recently in India, he has been itching to see if day-night cricket would work in this country.

To that end, he has sunk his life savings into this project, taking three months' leave from work to promote the game and offering substantial prize-money to the teams taking part. Far from "badgering" the clubs into putting the game on, he has looked at the success of both Lancashire and Yorkshire in the one-day form of the game, together with the support the clubs get, and approached us at Old Trafford to find out if we were interested.

Mr Kripalani bravely takes the view that if it is a disaster, he still has his home, a good job, two lovely young children and a very understanding wife. Neither will it dim his love of the game. We at Old Trafford will be doing our best to help him to ensure this venture is a success, and indeed profitable.

I would even extend an invitation to Mr Henderson to be my guest at the game, but I suspect he may turn it down!

Yours sincerely,
JIM CUMBES,
Sales and Marketing
Manager,
Lancashire County Cricket
Club,
Old Trafford,
Manchester 16.

Something wrong

From Mr Henry Wickens

Sir, I agree with Michael Henderson (Line and Length, July 8) that "a highly developed country like this one should not have to earn acclaim on any sports field to feel better."

However, from another perspective, living as I do in a country with a population of 300,000 — which won an Olympic gold medal in 1952 and the Tour de France some time before the war and has been quite properly congratulating itself on these achievements ever since — I feel that a country of some 50 million ought to be able to produce a few world-class sportspeople on a regular basis. If it doesn't, it must be doing something wrong.

I may add that I was quite alarmed to find how many of his "reasons for taking pride in being English" I agreed with, though I would add change-ringing and canal barges, and correct his choice of beer to Brakspear's Best.

Yours faithfully,
HENRY WICKENS,
14 Kalkewee,
L-7681 Waldbillig,
Luxembourg.
HWickens@europarl.eu.int

Sports Letters may be sent by fax to 0171-782 5211. They should include a daytime telephone number. e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

Jockeys merit better treatment

From Mr R. J. Shepherd

Sir, No doubt Kieren Fallon made a serious tactical error in the riding of Bosra Sham in the Coral-Eclipse Stakes at Sandown Park last Saturday, although it seemed to me by no means certain that they would have won but for that error.

However, I hate to read or hear of public criticism of jockeys by their trainers in the terms evidently used by Henry Cecil after the race (report, July 7). Cecil might, of course, legitimately express his annoyance and disappointment in private, but when speaking in public he should, I suggest, remember three things:

1. Jockeys every day exhibit great physical courage in race-riding. They risk their necks, which trainers do not.
2. Jockeys have to make split-second decisions of decisive consequence during races, which trainers do not.
3. Professional errors by jockeys in major races are immediately apparent to thousands of people and immediately vulnerable to comment by the media. Once again this does not apply to trainers, whose professional failures can be quietly covered up at home.

I would hope that trainers will try to express loyalty to their jockeys in public, and remember that those jockeys are at a sharper end of racing than they are.

Yours faithfully,
R. J. SHEPHERD,
Stratton End,
Cirencester, Gloucestershire.

From Mr Steve Miller

Sir, In reply to Simon Barnes's Midweek View (July 9), a slowly-run race and an appallingly misjudged piece of race-riding conspired to rob Bosra Sham of her rightful victory in the Coral-Eclipse Stakes. That Bosra Sham would have won seems (as her trainer, Henry Cecil, suggested) beyond question. The fact is that she didn't win.

I quite agree with Barnes that all jockeys (and indeed all sportsmen) make mistakes, but if Kieren Fallon truly believes there is nothing he could have done to rectify the mess that he got the filly into, in a five-horse race, it is very worrying. This, of course, takes nothing away from the filly herself: she is still every bit as good as ever she was.

While Fallon has undoubted ability as a jockey, he has proved conclusively that he is not the man for all occasions. We suspected it after his riding of Sleepytime in the Fred Darling Stakes at Newbury, now the irrefutable evidence is laid before us, to our cost.

Bosra Sham will be back, in the Juddmonte International next month and hopefully to retain her crown in the Dubai Champion Stakes, although it seems without Fallon.

However, I sincerely hope that connections of the champion filly will resist the temptation to tackle the likes of Pilsudski, Helissio and Singspiel, in the King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Diamond Stakes, or indeed in any group one race run at 12 furlongs. Bosra Sham is an exceptional filly (the best I have seen at a mile to ten furlongs), but to win a group one race at 12 furlongs may well be beyond even her.

Yours faithfully,
STEVE MILLER,
32a St Andrew's Road,
Enfield, Middlesex.

Family treble

From Mrs Susan Hillyard

Sir, Much has been made of the fact that it was so many years since two Britons reached the men's singles quarter-finals at Wimbledon. But when, if ever, have all three children of one family — as Byron, Wayne and Cara Black, of Zimbabwe, this year — played there in the same championships?

Yours sincerely,
SUSAN HILLYARD,
Laburnum House,
Great Longstone,
Bakewell,
Derbyshire.

FOOTBALL

Celtic seek truce with Di Canio

By Our Sports Staff

PAOLO Di CANIO, the errant Celtic forward, is expected to make his peace with club and play in a tournament in Ireland next week. Di Canio is due to have talks with Wim Jansen, the new Celtic coach, in the next few days and the club is hopeful that his differences can be settled then.

Jock Brown, the general manager, said that the former AC Milan player had indicated that he will take part in a four-team competition in Dublin on Tuesday and Wednesday.

"Wim is not arriving in Glasgow until Saturday evening because he had some business to clear up in Holland," Brown said. "I expect he will meet up with Paolo then.

Di Canio, 29, refused to join Celtic on a pre-season tour of Holland last week, claiming he was not fit enough after a virus and he also left Glasgow for two days. However, he has now resumed training, albeit on his own.

"Paolo trained again this morning, keeping the promise that he made in midweek that he was just taking two days rest period," Brown said. "I expect him to go to Ireland. He always said he would, it was only the trip to Holland he had a problem with."

Celtic play Derry City on Tuesday at Lansdowne Road, while Newcastle United meet PSV Eindhoven. The winners and losers play-off the following night. Celtic's large following in Ireland were denied the chance to see the Italian when the club last played in Dublin two months ago because he had been suspended by the club over an outburst in his dispute over contract terms.

Brown would not confirm reports that Henrik Larsson, a forward, would be joining the club from Feyenoord for £2 million.

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TENNIS

Britain saved as Henman sneaks home

FROM JULIAN MUSCAT, TENNIS CORRESPONDENT, IN KIEV

THE score may be level but the honours belonged to the home nation after Great Britain and Ukraine won one match apiece in their Davis Cup tie here yesterday. Tim Henman required more than three hours to dispose of Andrei Rybalko, ranked 350th in the world, before Andrei Medvedev dispensed a clay-court lesson to Greg Rusedski in the second rubber.

The tie would have been beyond redemption but for Henman's narrow victory against an obdurate opponent. As it is, the match is perfectly poised — although Medvedev's mastery of difficult conditions was such that the hosts must be favoured to prevail.

Medvedev teams up with Dimitri Poliakov for the doubles match against the provisional pairing of Henman and Neil Broad today. Medvedev then squares up to Henman in the singles tomorrow; he must be defeated at least once if Great Britain is to carry the day.

That appears the formidable assignment in the light of Medvedev's mood. It was greatly to Rusedski's credit that he claimed the third set, for the Ukrainian, ranked seventeenth in the world, threatened to inflict untold damage on Rusedski's confidence. Medvedev's array of shots is vast. He bestrode the little stadium like a Colossus, imparting dip and swerve to the ball with the dexterity of a magician.

Henman's demeanour betrayed his listless mind until he took hold of the match towards the end of the second set. A blustery wind compounded his difficulties in reading a court of distinctly uneven bounce. His service again caused him problems, and he became increasingly irritated at the proximity of a camera crew not remotely inclined to pay the players homage. It was no surprise to see him broken in game eight, when a badly mistimed overhead effectively cost him the opening set.

Henman's battling qualities are becoming legend but his problems were entirely of his own creation. He survived three break points in the second set before Rybalko, previously watertight on his own serve, capitulated at 4-5 like a ruptured battleship. Henman, ranked No 20 in the world, broke to love to level the match and started set three with a flurry of winning first services. Only then did he enforce a chasm in class spanning 330 places on the rankings computer.

It was not long, however, before Henman reverted to type. A shocking service game, comprising four unforced errors, cost him the fourth set, which he concluded by berating the umpire to incur himself a warning. Fortunately, he steadied the ship, a break in game six of the deciding set proving sufficient for him to prevail 3-6, 6-4, 6-3, 4-6, 6-4.

"Winning is the most important thing but I can't take a great deal of satisfaction in my performance," he said. "I need to pick up the mental intensity. I am a little bit flat."

Irrespective of the outcome of the doubles, Henman surely recognises the importance of the rubber with Medvedev tomorrow. He may be playing to keep the tie alive, a daunting prospect given Medvedev's outstanding display against Rusedski. If Rusedski looked demoralised with the vagaries of the bounce on a court of park-like qualities, Medvedev's superiority was absolute.

When Rusedski, striving to avoid a second-set whitewash at 0-5, won the game to love, it marked only the second time he held his service in the match. And when his opponent responded with a love game of his own, Rusedski had taken just seven points against the Medvedev service in two one-sided sets.

Rusedski opened the next with an act of defiance. He delivered three aces and immediately broke Medvedev with some superb volleying — albeit at full stretch. However, the sheer force of Medvedev's shots could not be resisted. He promptly swept away with the fourth set, and with it the match, 6-1, 6-1, 2-6, 6-2, after one hour 35 minutes of ferocious hitting.

Rusedski's assessment of his opponent was unerringly accurate. "I don't think I played as well as I *could* because Andrei wouldn't let me," he reflected. "He is a great player on a court made to suit him."

In the circumstances, David Lloyd, Great Britain's Davis Cup team captain, will be pleased to resume at parity today. He criticised the state of the court, suggesting it was not fit for tennis of this calibre, although he agreed that the plethora of bad bounces did not favour one side or the other.

Ukraine names first

RESULTS: Singles: A Rybalko lost to T Henman 6-3, 4-6, 3-6, 6-4, 4-6; A Medvedev bt G Rusedski 6-1, 6-1, 2-6, 6-2.

TO COME: Today: Doubles: Medvedev and D Poliakov v Henman and N Broad. Tomorrow: Singles: Medvedev v Henman; Rybalko v Rusedski.

HUGH ROUTLEDGE

Nick Skelton guides Virtual Village Tinka's Boy to third place in the Royal International Classic Grand Prix at Hickstead yesterday

Whitaker prevails for old order

BY JENNY MACARTHUR

WHERE are all the new British showjumpers? That was the question being asked at the Royal International Horse Show at Hickstead yesterday when, for the second successive time, established team riders dominated the international team trial — a competition designed to open up the selection process for the British team.

The trial, which was incorporated in the Royal International Classic Grand Prix, was won comfortably by Michael Whitaker on Virtual Village Ashley. The next best Briton was Nick Skelton, who finished third on Virtual Village Tinka's Boy, behind Ireland's European champion, Peter Charles, on T'Aime. Whitaker and Skelton have been regular members of the British team since the early 1980s.

With the first team trial at Windsor in May also failing to produce any significant new partnerships, it looks as though the usual four — Whitaker, his brother, John, Skelton and Geoff Billington — will make up the British team for the European championships in August. As one spectator observed: "The selectors are going through the motions but no one is going to trouble the top four."

At least the course for yesterday's event proved more of a test than Windsor's — where there had not even been a water jump. Designed by Jon Doney, the first round contained 12 fences which were big, wide and typically Hickstead. Helped by the excellent going in the arena, 12 riders achieved clear rounds.

Surprisingly, John Whitaker and his Aachen Grand Prix winner, Welham, were not among them. Whitaker, who is likely to gain one of the two automatic team places (the selectors have to take only the top three from the team trials) incurred four faults at the Hickstead planks, fence seven.

Skelton, who had the disadvantage of going first in the jump-off on the young Tinka's Boy — the horse he is likely to ride in the European championships — confirmed the scope of this talented eight-year-old with a second faultless round over a shorter but significantly bigger course. A thrilling spectacle ensued as successive riders then attempted to improve on Skelton's time of 57.50sec.

Dietmar Gugler, of Germany, who works for Paul Schockemohle, was clear but more than two seconds adrift on his careful mare, Donna Carara.

Di Lampard, a leading contender for the Queen Elizabeth II Cup tomorrow, was nearly a second faster on Abbervail Dream but faulted at the last fence. Michael Whitaker and Ashley, then put the memory of their disappointing performance in the rain-drenched Aachen Grand Prix firmly behind them with a fast and stylish round in 54.59.

Charles, who confirmed yesterday that he will not be defending his European title in Germany next month as a result of the leg injury his top horse, La Ina, sustained at Aachen, matched Whitaker's time over the first half of the course on T'Aime, his French-bred gelding, but then dropped behind to finish second in 55.56.

Afterwards, Charles, a former British rider who assumed Irish nationality in 1991 because he found it impossible to break through into the British team, said he wished that there had been team trials then. "They would also have had more meaning then because there were plenty of good riders and horses about — now there don't seem to be any British riders troubling the top four."

Malcolm Pyrah, the chairman of the British Show Jumping Association international committee — and instrumental in drawing up the rules for the four team trials — said he was not surprised that the "same picture kept emerging." "It's in the producing of horses where our riders are going wrong," he said. "They're in too much of a hurry and don't bring them on carefully enough."

HICKSTEAD RESULTS

ROYAL INTERNATIONAL CLASSIC GRAND PRIX: 1, Virtual Village Ashley (M Whitaker, GB) 0 faults in 54.59sec; 2, T'Aime (P Charles, Ire) 0 in 55.56; 3, Virtual Village Tinka's Boy (N Skelton, GB) 0 in 57.50

THE ROYAL INTERNATIONAL SPEED CHALLENGE: 1, LBH Fedor (P Goerink, Holl) 55.36sec; 2, Virtual Village Hunter's Level (J Whitaker, GB) 56.37; 3, Convent Hill Diamond (R Splaine, Ire) 55.54.

OSBORNE REFRIGERATION SUPREME RIDING HORSE: Champion: P Duncan's Charismatic (J Webber) Reserve: R Creed-Miles's Original Scin (R Ramsay).

RUGBY LEAGUE

Wigan pair beaten by World Cup winners

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

JASON ROBINSON and Gary Connolly were members of the Rest of the World side beaten 28-8 by Australia, the rugby league World Cup winners, in Brisbane yesterday.

The Wigan pair should really have been with their Super League colleagues in Paris but, in the scramble to sign contracts two years ago, they committed themselves to the Australian Rugby League (ARL). They flew home last night to prepare for the meeting with Brisbane Broncos in the world club championship next weekend.

The makeshift Rest of the World side in Brisbane also included former luminaries of the British game such as Craig Innes, Lee Jackson and Harvey Howard and, for a while, it looked as though the assembled cast might even produce an upset.

They went ahead after 23 minutes, thanks to some brilliant improvisation by Adrian Lam, their captain and a Papua New Guinea international. He sold five outrageous dummies before creating an opportunity for Darren Rameka, who spun out of a tackle to score.

Ten minutes later, Tim Brasher, the Australia full back, scored the first of his two tries, to put the Australians ahead. With only seconds of the first half remaining, however, Lam launched a hanging kick that Robinson knocked back for Jarrod McCracken, the New Zealand international, to score. The Rest were ahead 8-6.

Robinson was in excellent form, showing just why Wigan worked so hard to negotiate a way out of the contract that would have tied him totally to the ARL. He almost scored in the third minute of the match, when he leapt high to take another Lam kick, and he prevented two certain tries with his cover defence.

In the second half, however, The Australians were not to be denied. Brasher went over for his second try four minutes after the restart and then, in the space of 15 minutes, they ran in three more scores — that despite a valiant effort by Robinson to stop Terry Hill, the Australia centre, for the first.

"We didn't have much ball in the second half," Lam said. "You can't win matches like that."

White on course to turn Red

SALFORD Reds have become favourites to sign Josh White, the London Broncos scrum half, who had been expected to sign for the newly-promoted Hull Sharks.

White, 24, has been outstanding in the Broncos rising to second place in the Super League, but, with his contract up at the end of the year, he has attracted interest from other clubs.

His non-appearance at training on Sunday led to the Broncos suspending him for two weeks, which was followed by Salford showing an interest in him. The Reds have also put in a £50,000 offer for David Bradbury, Oldham's unsettled forward.

Andy Gregory, the Salford coach, has been ordered to the Rugby Football League headquarters next Tuesday to explain his outburst after his side's 31-14 defeat away to Leeds. Gregory criticised Robert Connolly, the match referee, accusing him of being a "big-head".

FOR THE RECORD

BASEBALL

NATIONAL LEAGUE: Chicago Cubs 2 St Louis 3; Florida 8 Philadelphia 7; Pittsburgh 0 Houston 7; Atlanta 7 New York Mets 10; Colorado 5 San Diego 11; Los Angeles 11 San Francisco 0.
AMERICAN LEAGUE: Oakland 4 Anaheim 8, Boston 8 Toronto 7 (11inns); New York Yankees 10 Detroit 3; Chicago White Sox 6 Kansas City 3; Minnesota 6 Cleveland 2; Seattle 12 Texas 9.

CRICKET

SECOND XI CHAMPIONSHIP: Third day of four: Northampton: Northamptonshire 556; Essex 224 and 254 (S J W Andrew 50). Northamptonshire win by an innings and 78 runs. Final day of three: Chesterfield: Derbyshire 371-9 dec and 241-6 dec; Durham 301-2 dec and 106. Derbyshire win by 205 runs. Haslingden: Lancashire 365-7 dec and 221-9 dec (M E Harvey 58; E J Stanford 4-105); Kent 204 and 254 (G Keedy 6-75). Lancashire win by 128 runs. Trent Bridge: Surrey 174 and 374-1 (N Shahid 200 not out, D J Bicknell 150 not out); Nottinghamshire 387-8 dec. Match drawn. Clevedon: Somerset 246 and 207-9 dec; Hampshire 137 and 135 (S Macgill 7-21). Somerset win by 180 runs. Hove: Sussex 393 and 303-5 (M T E Peirce 144, J P Pyemont 69); Gloucestershire 331-3 dec and 252 (R I Dawson 74). Sussex win by 113 runs. Harrogate: Yorkshire 338-8 dec and 176-8 dec, Middlesex 195 and 156 (I D Fisher 5-47). Yorkshire win by 161 runs.

CROQUET

HURLINGHAM: British Open Championship: Singles: Quarter-finals: R I Fulford bt C N Farthing +12tpo, +17tp, +11tp; R Bamford bt R J Brown +26tp, +13tpo, +8tp; C D Clarke bt C Southern +26qp, +26, +24 Doubles: Third round: Clarke and Fulford bt Gregory and Southern +18qnp, +26sxp; Avery and Gaunt bt Johnson and Morrow -4, +1, +12; Bamford and Mulliner bt Lidyard and Trimmer -4, +16tpo, +24tp.

EQUESTRIANISM

WORLD RANKINGS: 1, D O'Connor (US) 218pts; 2, M King (GB) 217; 3, M Todd (NZ) 204; 4, W Fox-Pitt (GB) 178; 5, B Tait (NZ) 156; 6, A Nicholson (NZ) 164; 7, H Tompkins (NZ) 140; 8, S Davidson (US) 138; 9, A Hermann (Swe) 128; 10, P Funnell (GB) 125.

GLIDING

ST AUBAN, France: World championships: No flying on eighth day. Standard (seventh day, revised positions; 448km six legs, 29 scored completions of 39): 1, P Hartmann (Austria, LS8) 127.3kph, 954pts; 2, B Seien (Holl, LS8) 126.4, 943; 3, H Haemmerle (Austria, LS8) 125.7, 937; 4, H Weiss (Ger, LS8) 124.4, 922; 5, D Jacobs (US, LS8) 123.2, 908; 9, A Davis (GB, LS8) 120.7, 881; 16, M Wells (GB, LS8) 116.4, 808 30 equal, B Spreckley (GB, LS8) 0.
ENSTONE, Oxfordshire: National open championships: Fifth day (185 km quad, 28 completions of 30): 1, R Jones (Nimbus 4) 102.8 kph, 633pts; 2, E Lysakowski (Nimbus 3D) 97.7, 587; 3, P Harvey (ASH 25) 96.3, 575; 4, D Innes (Nimbus 3) 95.9, 571; 5, M Foreman (ASH 25) 95, 563. Sixth day (provisional; 187 km quad, 19 completions of 29): 1, Innes 78.7 kph, 841pts; 2, R Jones 74.6, 818; 3, J Gorringe (ASH 25) 73, 800; 4, M Bird (ASW 22) 72.1, 791; 5, R Cheetham 71, 780. Leading overall positions (provisional): 1, Cheetham 4,910pts; 2, Innes 4,827; 3, P Sheard (ASH 25) 4,807.

GOLF

COAL VALLEY, Illinois: Quad City Classic: Leading first-round scores (United States unless stated): 65: B Halberg. 66: R Cochran, D Stockton Jr, S McCarty. 67: R Black, E Dougherty, W Mayfair, K Perry, J Gallagher Jr, B Fleisher, E Johnson, E Aubrey, D Toms, K Fergus, R Estes, M Sullivan, T Simpson, R Gamez, D Edwards, S Verplank, J P Hayes, T Pernice Jr, W Hoefe, J O'Keefe.

CORNELIUS, Oregon: United States Women's Open: Leading first-round scores (United States unless stated): 67: L Neumann (Swe). 68: S Redman, K Robbins, D Richard (Can), Se Ri Pak (S Kor). 69: L Kane, P Johnson, M Spencer-Devlin, N Lopez. 70: A Dibos (Peru), R Jones, J Chuasiripom, A Nicholas (GB), P Sinn (Taiwan). 71: L Hackney (GB), K Williams, A Fukushima (Japan), C Pierce (GB), D Eggeling, S Smyers, B Corrie Kuehn, J McGill, J Stephenson (Aus), J Pitcock. Other European scores: 72: K Marshall (GB), S Croce (It). 75: L Davies (GB). 76: C Nilsmark (Swe), C Sorenstam (Swe), A M Palli (Fr), H Alfredsson (Swe), C Matthew (Swe).
NORDCENTER CLUB, Finland: European women's team championship: First flight: Quarter-finals: England lost to Scotland 2-5 (England names first: Foursomes: E Ratcliffe and K Stupples lost to A Rose and H Monaghan at 19th; R Hudson and K Rostron lost to J Moodie and L Nicholson 1 hole. Singles: Rostron lost to Rose 1 hole; Stupples halved with A Laing; F Brown lost to Moodie 3 and 2; Hudson halved with Nicholson; Ratcliffe bt Monaghan); Wales bt Denmark 4-3 (Wales names first: Foursomes: E Pilgrim and L Davis bt A Moltke-Leth and R Rasmussen at 19th; R Morgan and N Evans lost to C Kuld and K Juul 4 and 3. Singles: Pilgrim bt C Faaborg-Andersen 1 hole; Morgan lost to Moltke-Leth 3 and 2; V Thomas bt Rasmussen 3 and 2; Evans bt Kuld 2 and 1; Davis lost to Juul 2 and 1); Sweden 4 Italy 3; France 4 Spain 3. Second flight: Ireland 4 Czech Republic 0; Austria 3½ Finland 1½; Germany 4 Belgium 1; Switzerland 3½ Holland 1½.

ORIENTEERING

LEOPOLDBURG, Belgium: World junior championships: Short distance: Men (5km): 1, J Rostrup (Nor) 23min 21sec; 2 equal, P Oberg (Swe) and R Gunnarsson (Swe) 23:23. British: 8, S Gould (Devon) 24:45; 15, A Squire (Edinburgh) 25:10; 42, D Jenkins (York) 28:03. Women (4.2km): 1, H Helskanen (Fin) 24:17; 2, K Mikova (Cz) 24:43; 3, H Jukkola (Fin) 24:46. British: 30, J Whitehead (York) 28:58; 43, J Stevenson (Edinburgh) 30:58; 52, C Ashton (Bristol) 33:47.

RUGBY LEAGUE

BRISBANE: International match: Australian Rugby League 28 Rest of the World 8.
ALLIANCE CHAMPIONSHIP: Halifax 15 St Helens 12; Hull 30 Featherstone 8; Oldham 23 Castleford 18.
AUSTRALASIAN SUPER LEAGUE: Adelaide Rams 8 Auckland Warriors 18.

ROWING

LUCERNE: World Cup regatta: Men: Sculls: Qualifiers for semi-finals: Slovenia (Cop), Latvia (Reinholds), United States (Koven), Czech Republic (Chalupa). Great Britain (Searle) second in heat one, goes to repechage. Quads: Qualifiers for semi-finals: United States, Italy, Germany. Great Britain (Kettle, Larkman, Greenaway, Wake) sixth in heat, two go to repechage. Coxless pairs: Qualifiers for semi-finals: Germany. Great Britain (Thatcher/Hunt-Davis), France, Lithuania, Holland, Australia, Croatia, New Zealand, Italy. Coxless fours: Qualifiers for final: Great Britain (Cracknell, Redgrave, Foster, Pinsent), Romania. Eights: Qualifiers for final: Australia, Romania. Great Britain (Beckley, West, Garbett, Attrill, Dennis, Story, Hamilton, Dunn, Cormack) third in heat one, go to repechage. Lightweights: Double sculls: Qualifiers for semi-finals: Poland, Germany, Italy, Spain. Great Britain (Beechey and Bedingfield) 5th in heat two, go to repechage. Coxless fours: Qualifiers for semi-finals: Denmark, Canada, Germany. Great Britain (Williamson, Watson, Strange, Butt) third in heat three, go to repechage. Women: Sculls: Qualifiers for semi-finals: Belarus (Khodotovitch), Denmark (Hansen), Germany (Rutschow), Bulgaria (Neykova), New Zealand (Scown). Great Britain (Batten). Great Britain (Laverick) fourth in heat four, goes to repechage. Double sculls: Qualifiers for final: Germany, Switzerland. Great Britain (Lindsay, Batten) third in heat two, go to repechage. Coxless pairs: Qualifiers for semi-finals: Romania, Canada, Australia. Great Britain (Blackie, Bishop) second in heat two, go to repechage. Lightweights: Double sculls: Qualifiers for semi-finals: Denmark, Romania, Holland, Canada, Germany, France, Sweden, Great Britain (Birch, Langlands), Greece.

SAILING

BT GLOBAL CHALLENGE: Sixth leg (Boston to Southampton): Latest positions (with miles to Southampton, as at 12:04GMT yesterday): 1, Group 4 924; 2, Toshiba Wave Warrior 941; 3, Concert 978; 4, Commercial Union 1,030; 5, 3Com 1,036; 6, Save The Children 1,043; 7, Nuclear Electric 1,050; 8, Motorola 1,061; 9, Courtaulds International 1,061; 10, Pause To Remember 1,063; 11, Ocean Rover 1,063; 12, Heath Insured II 1,065; 13, Global Teamwork 1,083; 14, Time & Tide 1,142.

TENNIS

DAVIS CUP: Euro/African zone: Group two play-offs: Ireland level with Greece 1-1 (in Dublin); Georgia lead Nigeria 2-0 (in Tbilisi); Latvia lead Ghana 2-0 (in Riga); Egypt level with Lithuania 1-1 (in Cairo). Asia/Oceania zone: Group one play-off: Uzbekistan level with Japan 1-1 (in Tashkent)
BRISTOL: Challenger tournament: Second round: J Delgado (GB) bt J Holmes (Aus) 1-6, 6-4, 6-1; P Tramacchi (Aus) bt J van Lottum (Holl) 6-7, 7-5, 6-4; J Coetzee (SA) bt J Knowle (Aus) 6-7, 6-2, 7-5; S Pescosolido (It) bt C Haggard (SA) 6-4, 6-3; A Hunt (NZ) bt S Downs (NZ) 6-2, 6-4; O Burrieza (Sp) bt N Gould (GB) 7-5, 5-7, 6-3; M Petchey (GB) bt V Spadea (SA) 7-6, 6-3. Quarter-finals: Petchey bt Burrieza 6-4, 3-6, 6-4; Hunt bt Tramacchi 6-7, 6-4, 6-3; Pescosolido bt Coetzee 6-3, 6-1; M Navarra (It) bt Delgado 6-2, 6-7, 6-3
BASTAD, Sweden: Men's tournament: Quarter-finals: J A Marin (Sp) bt T Nydahl (Swe) 6-2, 6-1; M Norman (Swe) bt J Tarango (US) 6-2, 6-3; K Kucera (Slovakia) bt M Larsson (Swe) 6-4 ret; C Costa (Sp) bt P Fredriksson (Swe) 6-2, 6-3.
GSTAAD, Switzerland: Men's tournament: Quarter-finals: A Corretja (Sp) bt A Berasategui (Sp) 6-4, 6-0; J A Viloca (Sp) bt N Kiefer (Ger) 6-4, 6-3; W Ferreira (SA) bt M Rosset (Switz) 7-5, 7-6; F Mantilla (Sp) bt J Sánchez (Sp) 6-4, 6-3
NEWPORT, Rhode Island: Men's tournament: Quarter-finals: L Paes (India) bt A Radulescu (Ger) 6-3, 7-6; S Sargsian (Arm) bt S Stolle (Aus) 6-3, 7-5.
FELIXSTOWE: Women's satellite tournament: Quarter-finals: S de Beer (SA) bt N Egorova (Russ) 3-6, 6-0, 6-4; N Grandin (SA) bt S Stanley (Aus) 6-2, 6-1; K Cross (GB) bt J Lutrova (Russ) 6-7, 6-1, 6-4; A Janes (GB) bt H Crook (GB) 7-5, 6-2. Semi-finals: Cross bt Janes 6-2, 6-2; De Beer bt Grandin 3-0 ret.
ATP RANKINGS: 1, P Sampras (US) 5,398pts; 2, M Chang (US) 3,768; 3, G Ivanisevic (Cro) 2,788; 4, T Muster (Austria) 2,724; 5, Y Kafelnikov (Russ) 2,436; 6, A Corretja (Sp) 2,208; 7, S Bruguera (Sp) 2,178; 8, T Enqvist (Swe) 2,148; 9, M Rios (Chile) 2,148; 10, C Moya (Sp) 2,085; 11, B Becker (Ger) 1,884; 12, G Kuerten (Br) 1,851; 13, M Philippoussis (Aus) 1,820; 14, A Costa (Sp) 1,765; 15, R Krajicek (Holl) 1,752; 16, F Mantilla (Sp) 1,747; 17, A Medvedev (Ukr) 1,654; 18, P Rafter (Aus) 1,634; 19, A Berasategui (Sp) 1,603; 20, T Henman (GB) 1,584; 21, T Woodbridge (Aus) 1,539; 22, P Korda (Cz) 1,538; 23, C Pioline (Fr) 1,440; 24, G Rusedski (GB) 1,433; 25, J Bjorkman (Swe) 1,431; 26, W Ferreira (SA) 1,413; 27, B Ulihrach (Cz) 1,298; 28, M Rosset (Switz) 1,274; 29, J Courier (US) 1,210; 30, A Agassi (US) 1,202.
WTA RANKINGS: 1, M Hingis (Switz) 5,778pts; 2, J Novotna (Cz) 3,556; 3, M Seles (US) 3,181; 4, I Majoli (Cro) 3,185; 5, S Graf (Ger) 2,680; 6, A Coetzer (SA) 2,545; 7, L Davenport (US) 2,437; 8, A Sanchez Vicario (Sp) 2,436; 9, A Huber (Ger) 2,258; 10, M Pierce (Fr) 2,201; 11, C Martinez (Sp) 1,973; 12, I Spirlea (Rom) 1,871; 13, M J Fernandez (US) 1,708; 14, B Schultz-McCarthy (Holl) 1,579; 15, K Po (US) 1,577; 16, B Paulus (Austria) 1,442; 17, R Dragomir (Rom) 1,421; 18, K Habsudova (Slovakia) 1,405; 19, S Appelmans (Bel) 1,325.

IN BRIEF

Petchey's patience pays off

MARK PETCHEY reached the semi-finals of the Bristol Challenger tennis tournament yesterday, surviving a stormy encounter with Oscar Burrieza, of Spain. Despite suffering from the effects of a virus, Petchey won a tight, three-set match 6-4, 3-6, 6-4, keeping an admirably cool head in the final set when Burrieza first threatened to walk off court during an argument with the umpire and then pulled back Petchey's 5-1 lead to 5-4.

However, Jamie Delgado failed to follow his fellow Briton into the last four, losing another close match 6-2, 6-7, 6-3 to Mose Navarra, of Italy.

Final move

Football: The Uefa Cup final next season will be played as a one-off fixture instead of the two-leg format of previous years. Lennart Johannson, the president of Uefa, the game's European governing body, said yesterday. It will precede the Cup Winners' Cup and European Cup finals in May.

Blatter bid

Olympic Games: Sepp Blatter, the general secretary of Fifa, football's world governing body, is to lead a bid by the Swiss city of Sion to host the 2006 Winter Games.

Becker goes on

Tennis: Boris Becker, 29, entered the forthcoming US Open yesterday, ending speculation that his recent Wimbledon appearance would be his last at a grand-slam event.

Spin doctor

Cricket: Intikhab Alam, the former Pakistan leg-spin bowler, will conduct a coaching clinic in the Caribbean in August with five of the West Indies' leading spin bowlers.

GUIDE TO THE WEEKEND FIXTURES

Today

CRICKET

Benson and Hedges Cup Final
11 0, 50 overs
LORD'S: Kent v Surrey

Tour match
10 45, 50 overs
EDINBURGH (Grange CC): Scotland v Australians

Northern Electric Trophy
11.0, 50 overs
SCARBOROUGH: Yorkshire v Durham

RUGBY UNION

International match
Australia v England (at Sydney Football Stadium, 11 0)

RUGBY LEAGUE

Stones Super League
Paris v Wigan (7.0)

OTHER SPORT

ATHLETICS: World championships trials (in Birmingham)
BOXING: World Boxing Council heavyweight championship: L Lewis (GB, holder) v H Akinwande (GB) (at Lake Tahoe) European super-bantamweight championship: S Oliver (Barnet, holder) v S Pofiblan (Fr) (at Olympia)
CROQUET: British Open championships (at Hurlingham).
CYCLING: Inter-Services 10-miles championship (Quarley, Hampshire, 2.0)
EQUESTRIANISM: Royal International Horse Show (at Hickstead).
GOLF: Loch Lomond World Invitational
HOCKEY: Women's International match: England v Spain (at Bisham, 4.0)
MOTOR RACING: British Formula Three championship (at Silverstone).
SPEEDWAY: Elite League: Bradford v Ipswich (7.30); Coventry v Swindon (7.30); Eastbourne v Belle Vue (7.30) Premier League: Berwick v Arena Essex (6.30). Four-team championship: Qualifying round: Stoke v Long Eaton v Hull v Sheffield (7.30) Amateur League: Berwick v Peterborough (8.0). King's Lynn and Ipswich v Long Eaton and Wolverhampton (6.0)
TENNIS: Davis Cup Euro/African zone: Group one: Play-off: Ukraine v Great Britain (in Kiev). Group two: Play-off: Ireland v Greece (in Dublin) Challenger tournament (in Bristol)

Tomorrow

CRICKET

Axa Life League
2 0, 40 overs
DERBY: Derbyshire v Yorkshire
CHESTER-LE-STREET: Durham v Warwickshire
SOUTHAMPTON: Hampshire v Worcestershire
TRENT BRIDGE: Nottinghamshire v Somerset
HOVE: Sussex v Gloucestershire

Tour match
11.0, 50 overs
WALSALL: English Cricket Board XI v Pakistan A

McCain Challenge
11 0, 50 overs
SCARBOROUGH: Essex v Leicestershire

MINOR COUNTIES CHAMPIONSHIP (first day of two). Southill Park: Bedfordshire v Lincolnshire Radlett: Hertfordshire v Norfolk. Tynemouth: Northumberland v Cambridgeshire Oswestry: Shropshire v Wales Marlborough CC: Wiltshire v Cornwall.

RUGBY UNION

International match
United States v Wales (in San Francisco, 1 0am)

RUGBY LEAGUE

Stones Super League
Sheffield v London (3 15)
St Helens v Halifax (6.35)

First division
Hull KR v Whitehaven (3 0)
Keighley v Wakefield (3 0)
Swinton v Dewsbury (3 0)
Widnes v Featherstone (3 0)
Workington v Huddersfield (3 0)

Second division
Batley v Bramley (3.15)
Doncaster v Hunslet (3.0)
Prescot v Rochdale (3 0)
York v Leigh (3 0)

ACADEMY CHAMPIONSHIP: London v Hull, St Helens v Halifax; Wigan v Featherstone

OTHER SPORT

ATHLETICS: World championship trials (in Birmingham)
CROQUET: British Open championships (at Hurlingham).
CYCLING: National 100km Keen time-trial championship (Tedburn St Mary, 8am)
EQUESTRIANISM: Royal International Horse Show (at Hickstead)
GOLF: Open regional qualifiers
HOCKEY: Women's International match: England v Scotland (at Bisham, 10.30).
MOTOR RACING: British Grand Prix (at Silverstone)
SPEEDWAY: Elite League: Swindon v Coventry (6 0) Premier League: Glasgow v Sheffield (6 30), Newcastle v Arena Essex (6 30) Amateur League: Buxton v Berwick (3 0); Lathallan v Peterborough (2.30), Newport and Exeter v Oxford (2.30).
TENNIS: Davis Cup Euro/African zone: Group one: Play-off: Ukraine v Great Britain (in Kiev). Group two: Play-off: Ireland v Greece (in Dublin) Challenger tournament (in Bristol)

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Rusedski's defeat leaves Britain struggling in Kiev

SATURDAY JULY 12 1997

Brittle wins rugby's long-running battle

By Mark Souster

Rogers: stressed experience

CLIFF BRITTLE was last night voted chairman of the new Rugby Football Union (RFU) management committee. He polled 599 votes, to 357 for Bob Rogers.

For the second day running, central London was invaded by men from the shires scenting blood. On Thursday, it had been the pro-hunting lobby, anxious to maintain its sporting traditions, which paraded in Hyde Park. Last night, it was the turn of the yeomen of Middle England, who represent the smaller rugby union clubs that form the backbone of the game, as the power struggle for the soul of the sport continued.

The majority of those at the annual meeting of the RFU last night backed Brittle against Rogers, the RFU committee's candidate.

Their standard-bearer was Fran Cotton, fresh from triumphs in South Africa, who urged support for Brittle who, Cotton said, had singlehandedly stood for the principles of tradition and integrity — especially in engineering England's readmittance to the five nations' championship and a more even distribution of the financial spoils throughout the game.

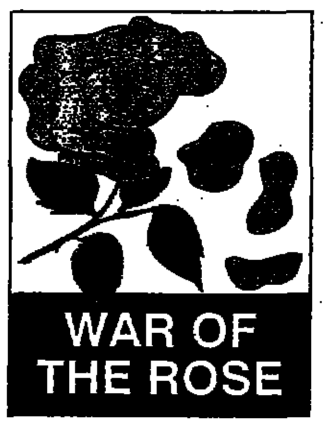
"It is time truth, balance and objectivity was brought to this election," Cotton said. "We must have someone with integrity, tenacity and drive to uphold, safeguard and develop interest at all levels of the game.

"If any man has shown that over the past 18 months, it is Cliff Brittle. The game should be saying: 'Thank God for Cliff Brittle.' ".

Cotton, the manager of the successful British Isles tour, said that Brittle's vision had been to develop northern-hemisphere rugby, as there was no reason why the southern hemisphere should "remain the dominant influence in world rugby".

Rogers, who enjoyed the support of Will Carling, the former England captain, had played on his 29 years' administrative experience and his belief that he could unify the various factions. "We must move forward together. It is important to restore integrity and credibility into the game. My vision is real and I will deliver," Rogers said.

Earlier in the meeting, further fall-out from England's temporary expulsion from the five nations' championship last year — its timing, who knew and when — clouded the meeting at the London Hilton Hotel. At the start of proceedings, John Richardson, the retiring president of the RFU, maintained that Brittle alone knew that England had been expelled, that he had been informed by fax but had chosen to say nothing.

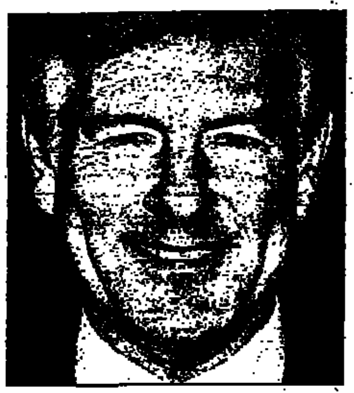


Brittle denied this. In the interim, Sir Tasker Watkins QC, president of the Welsh Rugby Union, Vernon Pugh, its chairman, Tom Kiernan, chairman of the five nations' committee, and Dr Syd Millar have all maintained that the RFU was aware of the situation.

Addressing Richardson, Cotton asked: "Are you calling Sir Tasker, Vernon Pugh, Tom Kiernan and Syd Millar liars? That is the clear implication and, on behalf of those people, I resent what is being said."

Looking back over his presidency, Richardson admitted that it had not been "a happy year" and he lamented that the internecine strife that has bedevilled the game could not have been settled privately without recourse to media leaks. In supporting the committee's nomination of Rogers, Richardson said that he felt his man would be "good for peace and unity in our game — and we need that".

Colin Herridge the RFU treasurer, said that it had been a watershed year for the game's finances, and that steps were being taken to ensure that the loss of £6.2 million last year would soon translate into a surplus. Herridge maintained that £100 million would flow into the game over the next five years, the bulk of it from the BSkyB television deal, the long-form contract for which was signed on Wednesday. Enshrined in that was the RFU's veto over pay-per-view broadcasting.



Brittle: enjoyed support

Tony Hallett, the acting RFU chief executive, outlined impending sponsorship deals worth some £2 million to replace, among others, those ended by Pilkington and Save and Prosper. Agreements would be signed and names revealed over the next two or three weeks, Hallett said, with the knockout cup being sponsored to the tune of £500,000, and another £200,000 for the county championship. A lucrative sponsor for the five nations' championship would also be announced in the near future.

Herridge defended criticism from junior clubs over the division of spoils, which will see £3.2 million being shared by 60 or 70 clubs and £3.6 million going 2,000 others. There was also criticism of the paucity of information contained in the accounts — a point which the union was prepared to concede.

☐ Sale, the Pilkington Cup runners-up and for whom Cotton played, have become the latest club to be taken over by a private company. Tourney, the sports management firm, has provided £2.5 million, and taken control of the rugby side at Sale. The company will lease Heywood Road.

Hill saga starts to spin out of control

By Michael Calvin

THE saga of Damon Hill's sullied reputation showed ominous signs of beginning to spiral out of control at Silverstone yesterday, when an unconvincing damage limitation exercise raised more questions about his future than it answered.

The indignity of finishing twentieth in free practice for the British Grand Prix, one place behind unregarded team-mate Pedro Diniz, was almost an irrelevance on a day of unflattering headlines, understandable anger and confusion.

Tom Walkinshaw, the Arrows owner, whose critical interpretation of Hill's approach to the problems of a struggling team has overshadowed preparations for tomorrow's race, insisted that there was "no crisis". He branded as "a lie" speculation that he had threatened the world champion with dismissal.

Coulthard at home 46
Lynne Truss 46

Hill, at the centre of a scrum outside the team motorhome, mounted a robust defence of his reputation, stung by the implications of a lack of application.

"Tom is entitled to put a rocket up the bum of his drivers," he said. "I've had much worse criticism, but I'm shocked by how much has been made out of it. I don't want to let anyone down, least of all myself.

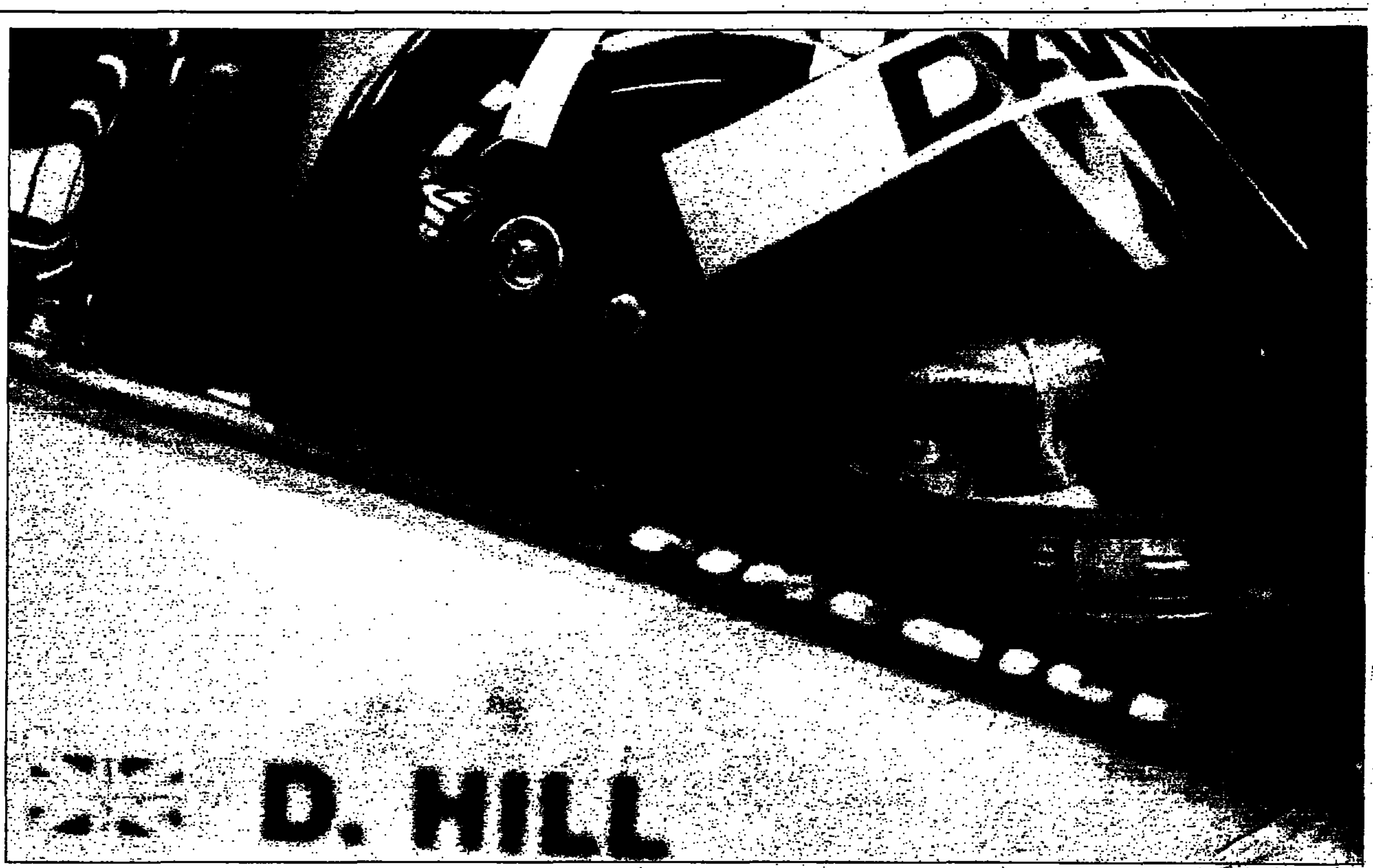
"I want to be back in the hunt for the world championship as soon as possible, and I'd like it to be with Arrows if they are able to offer me that package. Money is not the issue. I want to win. I don't want to be fifteenth, tenth or even sixth. I want to be first. That's what makes me go. That's what makes me fired up. That's what makes me want to race.

"I'm not keen to draw comparisons between the package represented by Tom and what we actually have. It would not be wise for a situation to evolve where one party starts to claim another party is not pulling his weight. We are all in this together."

Since even the merest hint of discord between Hill and Walkinshaw will be magnified in the present climate, the driver's stab at diplomacy was fatally flawed. Anyone associated with the controversy was canvassed for an opinion.

Bernard Dudot, the man behind Renault's all-conquering engine, set the tone of the debate by insisting that Hill would have successfully defended his world title, had he stayed with Williams. "It was a mistake to let Damon go," he said. "I wish he was still with us. He would have made the difference this year."

Frank Williams was predictably non-committal, but restated his admiration for his former test driver. He argued: "He's struggled with his car, but the Damon Hill I know is a world champion racing driver who has won a large number of races. That's all you need to say about him."



Hill had more to worry about at Silverstone yesterday, finishing twentieth in practice and then finding more problems over his situation at Arrows. Photograph: Marc Aspland

Inevitably, he was inveigled into a broader appreciation of Hill's employment prospects. Williams estimated that 12 of the 22 drivers on the grid will change seats at the end of this season, but stressed that it was "probable" that he would retain Jacques Villeneuve and Heinz-Harald Frentzen.

"It's therefore probable that Damon will not be driving for us in 1998," he said, when asked whether Hill's immediate reinstatement was an option. Intriguingly, he continued: "Certainly, if circumstances come together, I would re-employ him. He's a great driver."

The minefield of potential problems, created by the situation, was inadvertently highlighted by John Barnard, the design guru brought in from Ferrari to provide a car worthy of a world champion's talent. He innocently created unnecessary confusion by highlighting necessary development work. "First of all I had to make the car safe," he said at an official press conference.

"The next issue was to make it reliable. We have started to finish races and that is a step forward." It was not until further investigation revealed that his comments referred to a wishbone failure at Magny-Cours that Arrows' critics were diverted.

New components, designed to cope with greater stress loadings, will be used at Silverstone. This, in itself, was a typical example of Formula One's constant evolutionary process. But, in the prevailing climate, it merely stimulated fevered imaginations.

"I believe that if the team can get the right power plant, Damon wants to stay," Walkinshaw said. He reconfirmed that such a package is in place, and will be announced at the end of next month. But, this weekend, few people were listening.

Another poor race tomorrow, when Hill's performance will be the focal point for a capacity 90,000 crowd on the old airfield, and Arrows will be poisoned by assumptions of inferiority.

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Kendall's move brings writ

SHEFFIELD United have issued a writ against Everton and their new manager. Howard Kendall, who left Bramall Lane to take charge at Goodison Park last month (David Maddock writes). United hope to recover £1 million in what they claim were agreed levels of compensation for Kendall's services and what is suggested as being a breach of contract. It is understood a figure of £175,000 has been offered.

Everton have agreed to part with £7.5 million to secure the services of Fabrizio Ravanelli from Middlesbrough. They hope to talk to the player soon.

Paul Ince was on Merseyside yesterday for a medical before joining Liverpool, even though his proposed £4 million transfer from Internazionale has still to be resolved.

Blackburn Rovers have signed the Sweden forward, Martin Dahlin, from AS Roma.

Surrey aim to disperse storm clouds

By Alan Lee
Cricket Correspondent

LORD'S DETAILS

KENT (from): M V Fleming, M J Walker, D P Fulton, T R Ward, A P Wells, M A Ealham, N J Llong, P A Strang, S J Marsh (captain), M J McCague, D W Headley, G R Cowdrey, A P Igglesden, J B D Thompson.

SURREY (from): A D Brown, A J Stewart, B C Hollioake, G P Thorpe, A J Hollioake (captain), C C Lewis, M A Butcher, J D Ratcliffe, I D K Salisbury, M P Bicknell, Saqlain Mushtaq, J E Benjamin.

UMPIRES: D R Shepherd and G Sharp. Third umpire: J W Holder.

TELEVISION: Sky Sports 1: Live from 10 30am. BBC2: Highlights 8 10-9.10pm.

SURREY come to Lord's today with the adornment of ten international players and the reputation of a team with more style than heart. If they should fail again, then a final that could mark the end of the Benson and Hedges Cup may also record the end of peace and tolerance at the Oval.

The bookmakers believe that Surrey will beat Kent today and a superficial comparison of the teams would support them. Sterner inspection, however, has invariably cast doubt on the surface glitter of Surrey. Kent, boasting an improved spirit and a peerless record in this competition, are the team to expose any such fake.

This is the first time in 19 seasons that Surrey have reached the July cup final, itself an indictment of their underachievement. Within that period, they have won only two honours, the 1982 NatWest Trophy and the Sunday league last year, and judgment on their present campaign depends entirely on their performance today.

Fourteenth in the county championship and eleventh in the Sunday league, their season suffered another embarrassing blow when they were knocked out of the NatWest Trophy by Nottinghamshire on Wednesday. This final is a last opportunity of reprieve and the coach, Dave Gilbert, said yesterday: "We have got to win and there is no reason why we shouldn't.

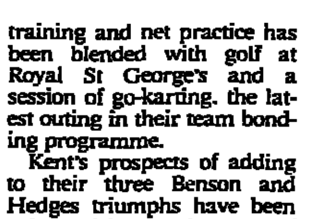
"What I have been trying to ram into the guys," he said, "is that the achievement is not reaching a final but winning it." It does not bode well that Gilbert should feel the need of such emphasis; it also speaks volumes for his concern over the priorities and focus of some of his players.

Both Gilbert and the club committee are wary of the distractions of the commercial and contractual interests of some players in a dressing-room in which half of the team is driven by one highly entrepreneurial agent, Gareth James.

If their worst fears are realised in defeat today, harsh words will undoubtedly ensue, perhaps followed by the departure of one or two players. Gilbert, whose own contract is up for renewal after this season, may hang his future on it, though he will hope to be spared the stress.

If the promised changes to the domestic structure come about next season, rather than in 1999 as is more likely, this may be the last year of two knockout cups. Any new system, however, should surely impose a lead-up to the remaining final that resembles the week just past, rather than the absurd September situation in which the NatWest Trophy finalists complete championship fixtures the night before their appearance at Lord's.

Surrey's preparations were dampened by the NatWest defeat but Kent, already out of that tournament, have enjoyed five free days. In this time, training and net practice has been blended with golf at Royal St George's and a session of go-karting, the latest outing in their team bonding programme.



Cowdrey: gamble

Kent's prospects of adding to their three Benson and Hedges triumphs have been enhanced by the clearance of their casualty ward. Graham Cowdrey is the last man to prove his fitness but, such is his influence in one-day cricket, that a calculated risk on his hamstring seems certain to be taken.

Cowdrey's cricket has been restricted to one Sunday league match in six weeks and to play him today would be, in the words of the Kent coach, John Wright, "taking a punt". Wright, however, sees Cowdrey as the man to disrupt Surrey's two spin bowlers, Saqlain Mushtaq and Ian Salisbury. "Life is a gamble," he said, "and playing Cowdrey is a gamble I am prepared to take."

If Cowdrey is included, it will be at the expense of David Fulton, who has only played two Benson and Hedges matches — the 1995 final and the semi-final this season. Trevor Ward's knee injury has responded to treatment and Martin McCague is also fit to resume a hostile new-ball pairing with Dean Headley.

Kent's game-plan will hope for an early breach by these two but depend rather more on frustrating Surrey's strokemakers by giving them nothing loose. As Kent are seeking to bat first and Surrey prefer to chase, the toss may be largely academic. So too, on the day of a final, are the results of previous games, but it is worth saying that Kent have beaten Surrey three times this season in one-day cricket. They would trade them all for victory today.

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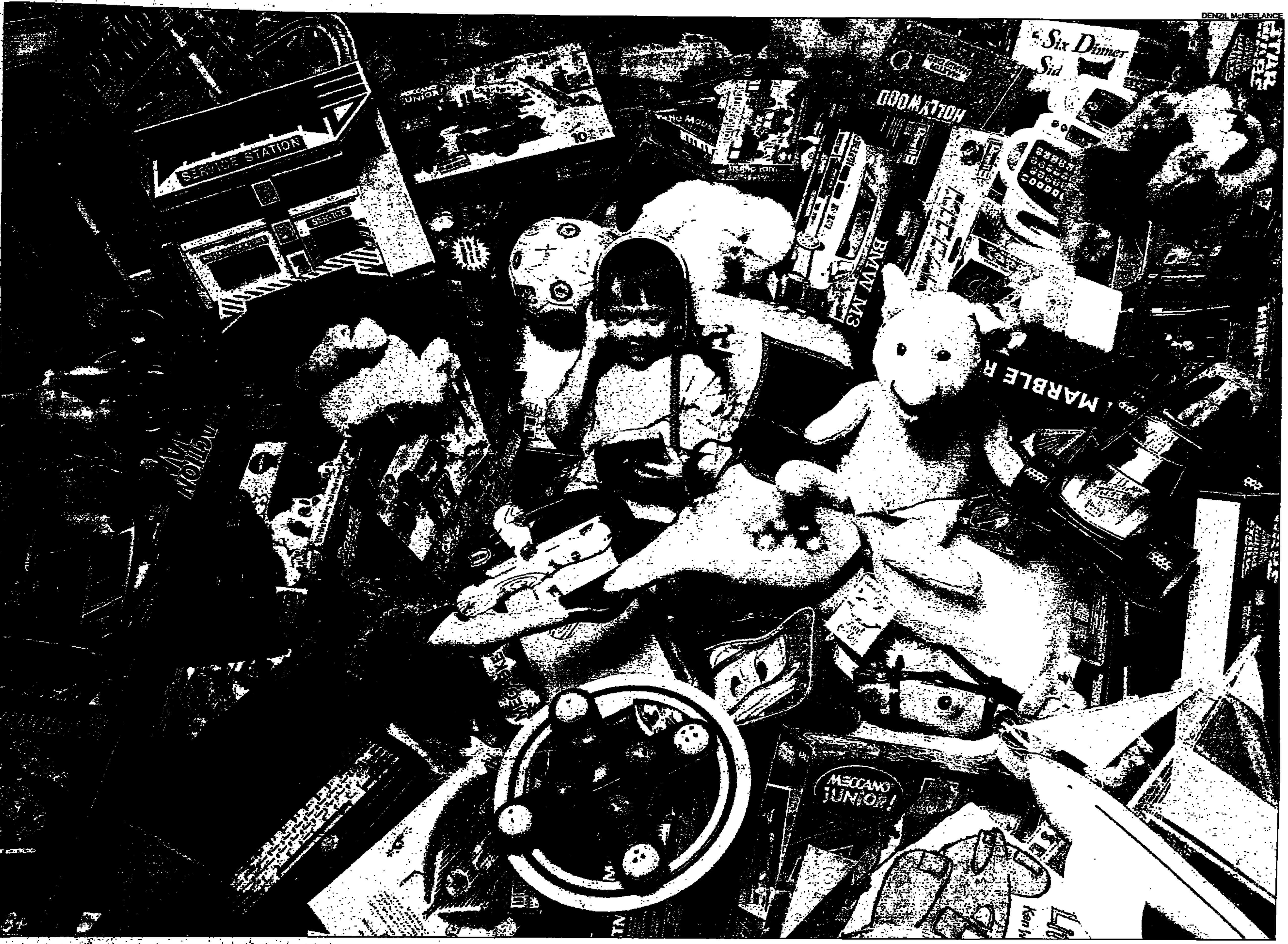
Libby Purves on how we are all guilty of spending our way to a child-centred society



DENZIL McNEELANCE

The spoils of childhood

Boom and consume, shop till you flop: Chelsea has a new department store. It is upmarket, beautifully fitted with wide, comfortable galleries and a stage-designer's vision. There is an indoor clock tower and beautiful barley-sugar twist banisters on the wide Edwardian staircases; a soda fountain, hair salon, clothes and shoes, and books and furniture, and bikes and games. No, not for you: everything on sale is for children under ten.

Ah well, you say — Chelsea. The King's Road. Drifting Sloane mums in Alice bands trying to fill nanny's day off; affluent access-daddies desperate for something to do which doesn't involve the swimming-pool changing room. But it is not just Chelsea: there is another one twice the size opening soon in Manchester, and plans for the rest of the nation. And for Europe.

Children's department stores are the latest brainwave from Tim Waterstone, the gentle, civilised, self-deprecating maverick who changed the face of British bookselling in the Eighties. He has called the stores Daisy & Tom, after his three-year-old daughter and the son of Christopher Thomson, of the publishers D.C. Thomson, his backers. But his personal credentials for starting such an enterprise are impeccable.

"Look, I have eight children, from 34 down to three," he says. "I want to create a shop which pays children the *compliment* of offering good quality in surroundings designed for them. We will not be selling tat. OK, I did rashly tell one journalist that we won't stock Barbie but, as it happens, we will. But we will not be majoring on Barbie. Lots of good quality wooden toys."

Good quality wooden toys are, of course, the kind of thing that usually appeal rather more to wistful parents than to their techno-generation children. There is also, true to his Waterstone's background, the biggest children's bookshop in the country right at the centre, with a firmer promise of good storytelling sessions and absolutely no teen trash fiction.

The Chelsea Daisy & Tom opens at the end of the month, and the proud father showed me round the half-finished shop: the working hand-carved fairground carousel, the murals, the Germanic clocktower with gilt faces and moving figures, the puppet theatre on the clothes floor featuring the only antique marionettes ever to be run by programmed animation.

In the entrance there is another *coup de théâtre*: an electric train set which runs under the Perspex floor you walk on. Rather unkindly, I pointed out that any normal toddler's first action will be to fall on its face and press its nose to the floor to see the train better. Incoming shoppers will trip over them. Mr Waterstone firmly led me away to show off the miniature lavatories with customised tiles.

Decadent? Institutionalised spoiling? Western sentimental fantasy, insulting to a world where six-year-olds toil in dark factories? Perhaps. But it is very pretty, and it would be hard to begrudge Mr Waterstone another success. At least his commercial policy is quixotically fixed on pretty shops and friendly atmosphere; unlike that of bigger, colder-eyed public companies who entice children into an atmosphere of hard-sell. It is a vast market (£320 million in children's books, nearly £2 billion on toys, uncounted billions in clothing spent in the UK each year) and most of it is certainly not conducted amid such cranky Edwardian elegance, nor in such a kindly and literate atmosphere.

With a few honourable exceptions, children's goods inhabit tacky warehouses, overpriced boutiques, or snobbish cramped children's departments which make few concessions to the smaller customer's real comfort. If Waterstone the kindly dolphin has decided to swim in the shark pool, perhaps we should be grateful.

But the advent of Daisy & Tom does make you reflect on what has happened to Britain over the past few decades. Parents do not need surveys such as Asda's recent *What Price A Child?* to remind them that it costs tens of thousands to be a consumer parent. These reports are fascinating, if only because they encourage all parents — consumer or not — to compare their own expenditure with the surreal-sounding figures conjured up. They always feature items such as equipment 0-five years at £2,000, and birthdays and Christmas five-11 years at £4,614, as well as more credible costings for clothes, food, holidays, transport and educational extras. The assumption is that if it is available, you'll try to afford it,

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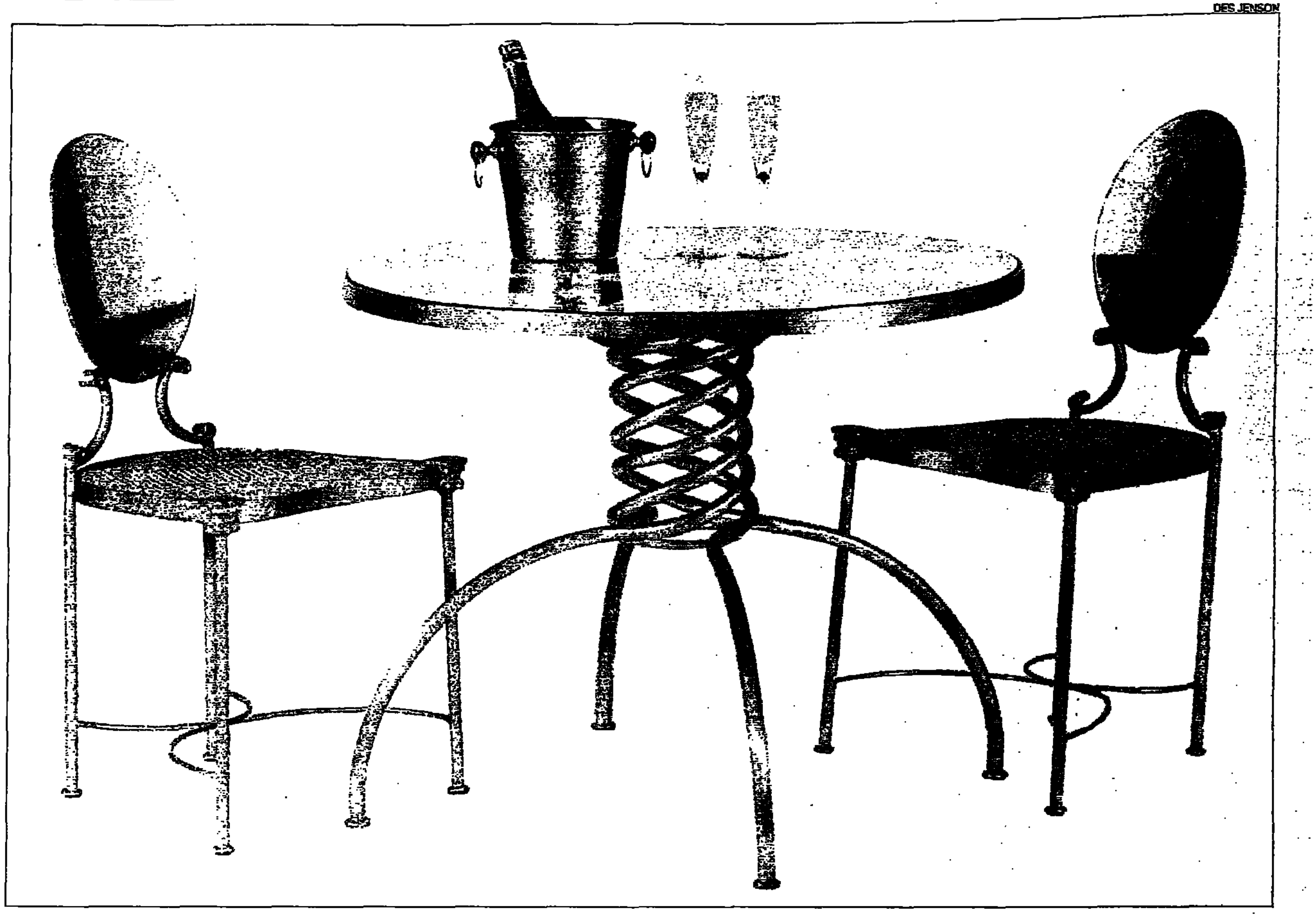
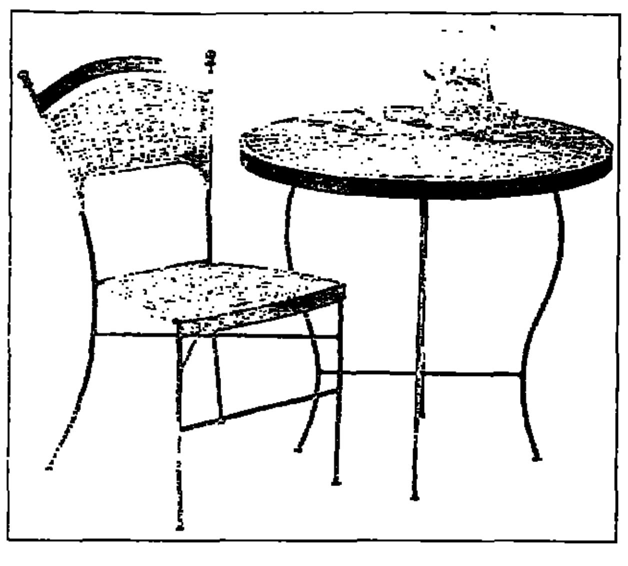
Ditch the plastic this summer and invest in modern garden furniture that looks elegant too, says **Caroline Griffiths**

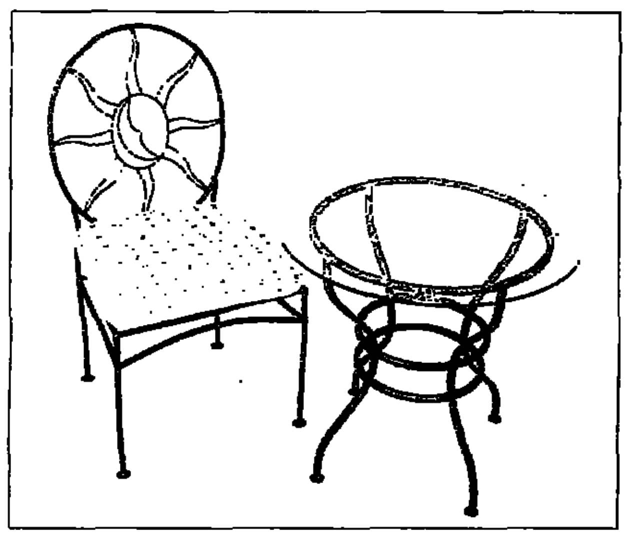
Reserve a chic place in the sun

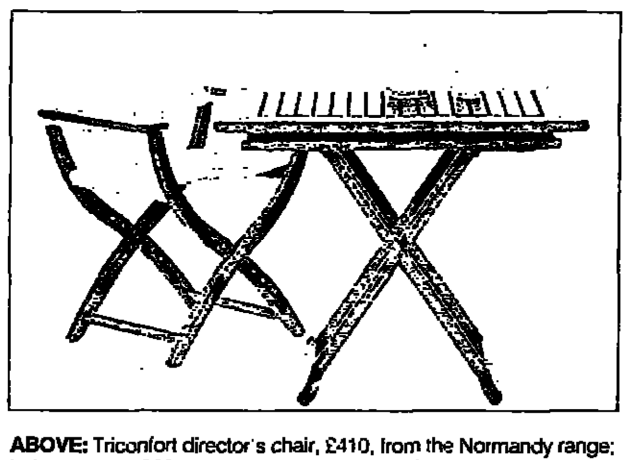

DES JENSON


ABOVE: Giselle bistro table, sale price £59 Giselle bistro chair, sale price £45, from selected branches of House of Fraser (0171-963 2236)

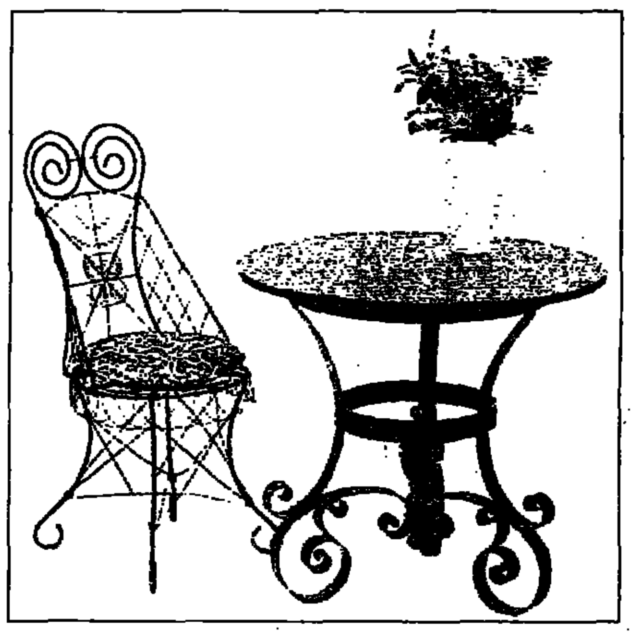
RIGHT: Spring table, £300, oval chair, £132, plus p&p, (also available in square back) from Bisca Design Shaw Moor Farm, Harome, York (01439 771702)

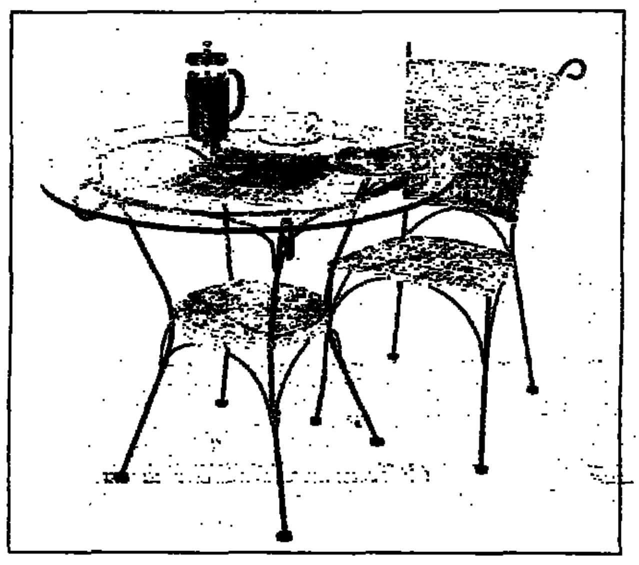
BELOW: Hand-forged iron Hour Glass table, £345; sun chair, £245, (including cushion) mail order from The Iron Design Company, Summer Carr Farm, Thornton le Moor Northallerton, North Yorks (01609 778143)




ABOVE: Triconfort director's chair, £410, from the Normandy range; balcony table, £635, adjusts to three heights, from Interiors Furniture and Furnishing, 224-226 York Road, Battersea, SW11 (0171-924 2400); mail order (01279 816001)

RIGHT: Urn table with weatherproof slate top, £1,364; weatherproof Chloe chairs, £310 each (cushion not included), from Marston & Langinger, 192 Ebury Street, SW1 (0171-824 8818)




ABOVE: Wrought iron and rattan Farindo glass top table, £175; Farindo chair, £79, from The Pier (0171-814 5020)

Continued from page 1

be it a designer Swedish highchair or a pair of cute £80 trainers for a baby who can't walk yet.

It goes wider, too. If children's goods are a massive commercial sector, so are childish entertainments. Moppets whose parents counted themselves lucky to be taken around Kenwood now have the prospect of Alton Towers and Thorpe Park, Chessington and Legoland. Holiday companies fall over themselves to offer child-friendly holidays — though not precisely family holidays, because the emphasis is on crèches and clubs and other devices of containment. When I was a beach brat in France, we used to look with horrified amazement at French children corralled in Le Club Mickey while *maman* sunbathed; we Brits had family life on holiday, even if the entertainment was limited to sulphurous egg sandwiches and Burying Father.

What has happened? What led us all the way from Derry & Toms to Daisy & Tom? It is not so long since we were a nation which dressed its young in cutdown adult clothing (remember heavy, hairy coats which cut into your armpits?). Children were expected to watch their dads play cricket on Saturday, and to wriggle on chairs during long, boring Sunday visits to great-granny with no reward but a dry macaroon. No McDonald's, no inflatable ball-ponds and foam-rubber Wonderworlds. Toys were fewer and all too often educational. No Nike Airs or Docs for us, just brogues or those loathsome Mam'zelle Casuals with fringy leather bits on the instep. Young reader, you may not believe this, but in the dark 1960s it was commonplace for girls to *wear their school shoes in the holidays.*

'If you live without hope it makes sense to fulfil children's dreams'

"Town and country planning has ignored children for decades in favour of cars, and street crime." *Photograph, Hulton Deutsch*

There has been both pleasure and dismay for my generation, watching it all grow. Even I, as a mother in the early Eighties, came too early for such aids to infant rearing as all-purpose baby chairs, Tumble Tots classes, under-three music sessions, junior judo and baby massage. We had to make do with carrycots and dancing classes so unchanged since the 1950s that it was instructive to listen to my then three-year-old son in conversation with a tractor driver on the subject. "Do you go to Mrs G's, then?" "Yer, I did that." "Does she still make you do good-toes-bad-toes? Bet she does." "And bunny-hops." "I used to hate bunny-hops." "Yeah, and being a sunflower." There was some continuity, at least.

Of course, there are still children who go biking on their own, build dens in the hedge and roll in mud; who still think it is a big deal to go into Ipswich, and have not discovered that C&A is not a designer label. But television soon shows them the new kiddy consumer deal, and eventually they want it. And I can't blame them. There is no point parents inveighing against commercial exploitation of childhood: we encourage it. The advertisers' theory of "pester power" and direct advertising to children would not work if we didn't give in.

But we do. It is easy to become addicted to the moment when a loved child widens his eyes and gasps with amazement at the miraculous gift or treat the power of our money has brought. I never enjoyed being a consumer so much as during the years when my children were toy-lovers: the wind-up plastic drill, the fort, the steam engine, the roundabouts, are memories as glorious for me as for them. The marketeers are only giving us what they reckon we will buy. Not just novelty or cuteness, but a whole package designed to reassure us — for money — that the world welcomes our children and cares what happens to them.

Guilt helps, too. There is the obvious guilt of working parents, but there is something wider, too. When the childless complain at the kiddy industry taking over the landscape they tend to moan that "every damn thing is geared to kids". But they are wrong. What has really happened is that we see daily how dangerous, how uncertain, how bad and sad things are for the world's children: and it makes us want to get out the plastic card and buy our own a fairyland. Television contemplation of brutalised or starving children does not make us less likely to spoil our own, but more so. Seeing how thin is the veneer that stops humankind mistreating children, how frail our fantasy of safe and cherished childhood, we throw up a wall of soft toys and novelty beds in denial of this horror. Rather as, traditionally, mothers from the grimiest industrial slums used to put their children into white socks. Just watch the silly smiles on adult faces as they accompany their little ones round Disneyland Paris's Small World ride, watching animated happy dolls dance in national dress as you pass from one happy innocent land to the next. Aaaah! We know it is an illusion, but we have paid good money for it.

WHAT PRICE A CHILD?

	1967	(REAL TERMS)	1997
Pushchair	£4	£36.80	£100
Cot	£7	£64.40	£200
Highchair	£6	£55.20	£40
Ice lolly	6d	23p	45p
Packet of crisps	3d	12p	22p
London Zoo	4/-	£1.84	£6
Tooth fairy	6d	23p	£1
Pocket money	7/-	£3.22	£1.69
Action Man	32/6	£14.90	£9.99

Sources: Mothercare/Lyon's Maid/Golden Wonder/London Zoo/Office of National Statistics/Mark Borkowski PR/Bank of England

Guilt also has a more immediate aspect. British town and country planning has ignored children for decades in favour of cars, and street crime. William Brown and the Outlaws are no more, still less their smaller followers. We cannot give them freedom because of traffic and lurking paedophiles, and the embarrassed fear which has choked the old social instincts.

In living memory all adults still felt able to question, reprove and protect all children. Today we don't. Part of the trauma of the James Bulger case was that his abductors were not challenged by anyone who saw them march him to the railway line.

So we keep the children in and gild the cage with bedroom televisions and computer consoles. We can't enjoy a family walk through the urine-stained underpasses of the cities wrecked by cars, so we strap them in yet another car and go to Alton Towers. We fear that they won't get jobs, will be poisoned by pollution or burnt by the hole in the ozone layer. If you live without faith or much hope, it makes sense to fulfil children's dreams right now, while they are small and the dreams are simple.

Well, there are worse places for a child than standing on a pedestal, receiving tribute. At least there is love behind it, and at least the Daisy & Tom shop is designed so that the working mother or the access daddy will be obliged to stand and look at the puppets or the carousel and share a child's enjoyment, rather than flashing the plastic, shouldering the loot and running out of the place with a bewildered toddler in tow. There are worse sicknesses in society than spoiling children.

But the trouble is that if a fairyland of imagination and bright play is available for sale while free parks and children's libraries are run down and the streets grow ever more crime-ridden, the gulf between rich and poor widens, cruelly, just at the age when everybody should be equal.

And what about those children, the ones who are economically shut out from all the fun and prettiness, and know it? When I left Daisy & Tom, I saw a familiar figure in a Tube station: a blank-eyed teenage girl who begs with a pale baby in her arms. Commuters were walking past, accelerating, looking away in guilty irritation at what was being done to their emotions.

It is being carried out quite calculatedly by this girl mother — I have spoken to her several times and she is not without choices in her life. She has considerable success, exploiting our unease about children in her own low-tech way. Those who walk past often throw her money, because of the baby crawling on the dirty subterranean concrete. Just throw the money at the child and hurry on through life: ah well, we all do a bit of that.

● *Cover photograph toys courtesy of Daisy & Tom and Hamleys.*

PHOTO: DAILY MAIL

FORCED TO SUFFER IN A CAGED HELL

This poor, suffering creature is one of twelve neglected horses recently discovered in Cheshire. Its coat infested with lice and its ribs clearly visible, the horse was left to starve in this small cage. Many of the others were in far worse condition - one sadly died on the day we were called.

ILPH field officer Paul Teasdale, despite thirty years experience with horses, was shocked by what he saw.

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هكذا في الأصل

نقلاً عن الأصل

Shift into top gear

Steer yourself away from stodgy separates and into the fast lane with stylish dress suits, says **Heath Brown**

Camel needle cord shift dress, £159, Episode, branches nationwide (0171-589 4279). White fine sheer knit cardigan, £25, Etam, selected branches nationwide (0171-494 7732)

Camel needle cord jacket, £239, Episode, branches nationwide (0171-589 4279). Choc fine belt tie vest, £47, Jigsaw, branches nationwide (0171-491 4484). Sage pinstripe fine wool trousers, £140, Jaeger, 200 Regent Street, W1, and branches nationwide (0171-200 4000). Choc suede gold buckle sling backs shoes, £59.95, Bertie, 36 South Molton Street, W1, and branches nationwide (0171-935 2002)

ABOVE: Camel needle cord jacket, £239, Episode, 172 Regent Street, W1; 16 St Anne's Square, Manchester, and branches nationwide (0171-589 4279) Blue fine rib vest, £37, Jigsaw, 126-127 New Bond Street, W1, and branches nationwide (0171-491 4484). Pink silk and cream lace skirt, £45, French Connection, 249 Regent Street, W1, and branches nationwide (0171-580 2507)

The key word in any woman's wardrobe should be versatility. Although one-off wonders in vibrant colours and avant garde designs will always be tempting, getting carried away and indulging yourself usually only leaves a hole in your pocket. And often, such an outfit is so memorable that when you've worn it once, you're unable to bring it out of the wardrobe again until a decent time period has elapsed.

Sensible dressing doesn't have to be boring, though. Just take a look at the dress suit, which is the proper way to describe a tailored shift dress with matching jacket. For summer, it is flattering to the figure in a neutral colour such as camel, sand or deep chocolate brown. Beware staple black or navy because these can look rather severe in the bright sunshine, but white is a classic look, especially with a tan.

A dress suit is undoubtedly comfortable, with clean, uncluttered lines. And few ensembles solve the eternal problem of summer officewear more stylishly. After six o'clock, drop the jacket, replace it with a neat cardigan and you have an elegant yet relaxed outfit, ideal for informal after-work outings. If the occasion is more glamorous, drop the dress instead and wear the jacket over a lacy slip frock.

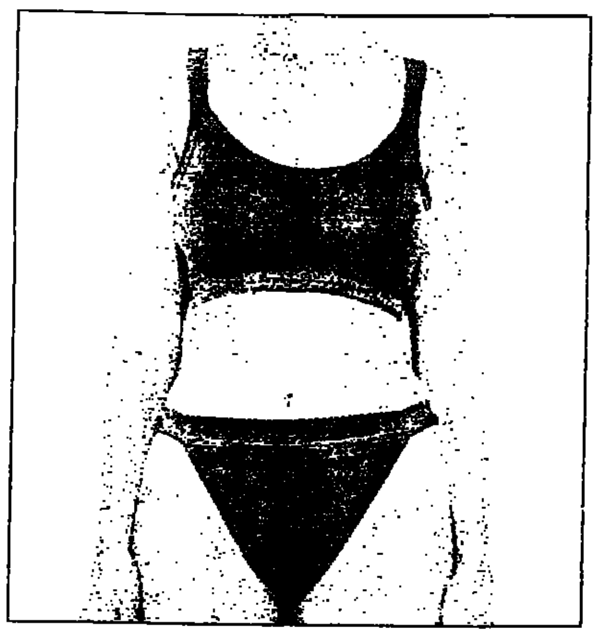
You can create a different look again by adding a pair of well-cut contrasting trousers and matching top; or wear the jacket with a lighter blouse and a darker pair of pants to create a trouser suit. However, when mixing and matching, ensure that the contrasting colours you wear with the jacket or dress tone well. Pitch the contrast too bright and you will end up with a garish mismatch. After all, the beauty of the dress suit is its simplicity — and versatility.

LEFT: Camel needle cord jacket, £239; matching shift dress, £159, Episode, branches nationwide (0171-589 4279). Beige choc stripe ankle tie shoes, £49.99, Ravel, 184-188 Oxford Street, W1, and branches nationwide (0171-631 0224)

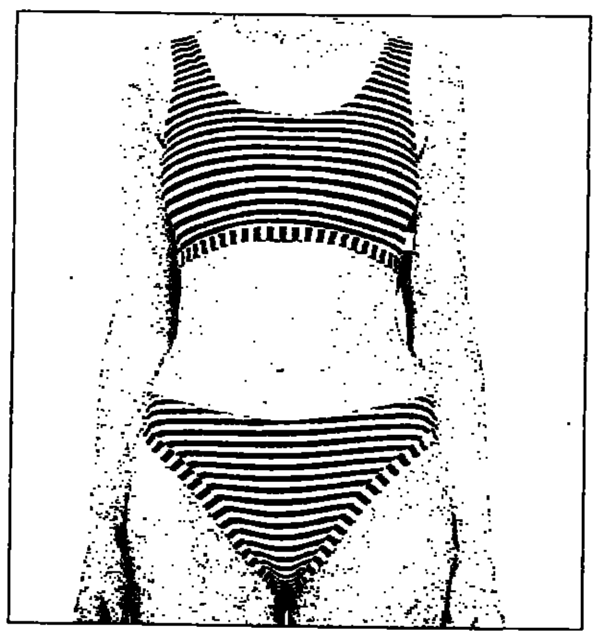
Photos: **Richard Burns**. Hair and make-up: **Sarah Gottschack** using Glauca Rossi Products (mail order, 0171-289 7485). Styling by **Amandip Uppal**

THREE OF A KIND

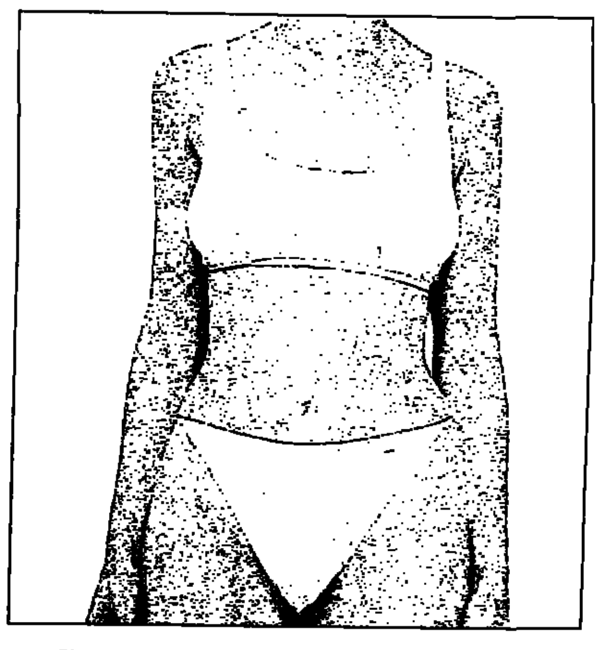
GO FOR the strong, sporty look and choose cotton cropped bra and knicker sets with an androgynous edge. Here are three of the best around. H.B.



Dark blue cotton bra, £12, matching knickers £12, La Senza, 33 King's Road, SW3 (0171-831 1000)



Dark green/cream stripe bra, £10.99; matching knickers, £5.99, Knickerbox, branches nationwide (0171-284 1744)



Pistachio fine cotton bra £18; matching knickers, £11, Calvin Klein, Selfridges, W1; Harrods, SW1 (0171-730 1234)

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GARDEN ANSWERS

STEPHEN ANDERTON

replies to readers' letters

Q My irises grow to about 3ft tall, with three flowers per stem. They grow straight, but fall over when they flower. Could I stake the stems, or should I be doing something else? — R. Chadwick, Radliffe on Trent, Notts.

A Three flowers per stem is a bit feeble. Perhaps your irises need replanting in enriched soil — and it is best to do that now. But don't use green, nitrogenous manure. It is old compost or manure they need, dug in deep below them. If you plaster the plants with nitrogen on the top layer they will produce only leaf and no flower. By encouraging stronger stems and flowers they should stand up better. Even so, many of the tall "bearded" irises are prone to flop, especially after a wet June. Fasten them to canes or replace them with smaller bearded varieties. Generally, the smaller the iris the earlier it will flower, so the dwarf varieties will appear in April or May. But the intermediates flower only a little before the tall varieties, in the second half of May. They are just as showy and stand up much better.

Q I am trying to find the name of a South African plant known as the "blood flower". Can you help? — B. Morgan, Newcastle, Co. Down.

A This is *Scadoxus multiflorus*, subspecies *katharinae*, a member of the amaryllis family. It used to be known as haemanthus from *haema*, the Greek for blood. It is a large bulb and not hardy. It can be grown in Britain in 8in pots or tubs with a winter temperature of not less than 50F/10C. Pot up in March for July flowering. The flower is a spectacularly vulgar red affair on a fat 6in green stem. There is one flower per bulb, held bolt upright and looking like a big red leek. *Haemanthus coccineus* has a flower that looks as if a fat red shaving brush has been dropped into a fat red tulip, hence the name "cape tulip".

Q I have a clump of white *Campanula lactiflora*. Last year I cut it back after the first flush of flowers to produce a second flush. But the white milky sap gummed up my hands and secateurs and the only way to clean it off was with nail varnish remover. Any suggestions? — D.M. White, Cardiff.

A This is a wonderful plant, a 6-7ft pillar of cloudy white, pale blue or mauve bells. 'Prichard's Variety' is royal blue. They all need support but are worth the effort, and are perfect with big shrub roses. If you cut off the top 2-3ft of each stem, to just below the first flush of flower, further but smaller flowering shoots will be produced from the sides. I have done this for years and, although the job is messy, it has never been a problem. I wonder if you were dealing with opium poppies or euphorbias at the same time? They certainly have sap that is hard to remove. Gloves are never a bad idea when dealing with sappy species.

● *Write to: Garden Answers, Weekend,* The Times, *1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. Advice is offered without legal responsibility.* The Times *regrets that any enclosures cannot be returned.*

Stephen Anderton explains the methods of making summer cuttings from deciduous shrubs

A proper way to propagate

My garden did not have a perfumed plant in it last year — it was a desert. Passing the summer without the scent of mock orange is a misery not to be borne, so a few weeks ago I planted *Philadelphus lemoinei* 'Erectus'. It only grows to 6ft, but every year it is covered in small white flowers which smell heavenly.

I also fancied some of the ordinary tall mock orange, *Philadelphus coronarius*, which is just as generous in flower and perfume. It is most commonly seen in its yellow-leaved form 'Aureus', whose foliage burns in hot sun and whose flowers are invisible among all that glittery unstable yellow. But the plain green *P. coronarius* is what I was really after. It makes a good edge-of-garden plant, where village meets country, like the yellow-berried guelder-rose *Viburnum opulus* 'Xanthocarpum'. It will also take a lot of shade and still do well.

A neighbour has a couple of huge specimens of this mock orange, so I asked for a potful of cuttings. I went to get them early, with a plastic bag and a pair of secateurs.

The reason to go before breakfast is that at this time the soft new growth is as turgid and full of water as it is ever going to be. This means the cuttings stand the least chance of wilting. Propagation is a race between you and bacteria. The sooner you can grow roots on a cutting, the sooner you can take off the polythene and put the cutting in fresh air, where it will not rot. The more it wilts, the more cells are damaged, and the easier rot can find a way in.

At this time of year there is a choice of ways to make cuttings of deciduous shrubs such as philadelphus, deutzia, abelia, kolkwitzia, caryopteris, potentilla and sage. You can make soft tip cuttings a couple of inches long, dipped in rooting hormone, inserted half an inch into a pot of sand and covered with polythene. Keep them as light as possible, without being in direct sun. It is helpful to dip the whole cuttings in dilute spray-strength fungicide before you insert them in the sand, and to settle them with a watering of the left-over fungicide.

Alternatively, you can take semi-ripe shoots, 5-6in long, now and into late summer. These are made from this year's shoots. They are separated from the bush at the point where the shoot began growth this year, with a "heel" of old wood. Use hormone rooting powder, fungicide and polythene as for the soft tip cuttings. You may wish to nip out the soft tip of these cuttings because this is the part most likely to wilt and rot.

Some books advise rubbing out the lower buds of the cutting — those which will be below the surface of the cutting compost or sand and, ultimately, below the soil. That is fine if you want a plant on a "leg" (a clean single stem), but I find it unhelpful. There is nothing more useful in a young shrub than growing a strong shoot from below the soil. It is always much stronger than the growth that comes off the cutting itself. Nine times out of ten it is this basal shoot which makes the first real new stem for the young plant. Often the old cutting grows a low twiggy branch, which makes little progress and can be cut away in due course.

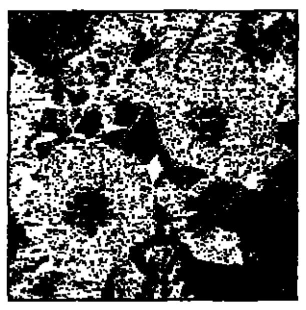
Not all plants have this habit. It tends to work best with those which make long clean shoots with long gaps between the leaves. Densely-leaved species such as ceanothus, rosemary and lavender are not so obliging.

Last year, I bought a small plant of the dark-leaved elder 'Guincho Purple'. I planted it mid-summer and, because of the drought, I forgave it for not making strong shoots from the base. But this year it has again only made growth from the cutting itself, and nothing from below, even though it has been well fed. I shall have to cut it down next spring to shock it into making some strong upright growth. If only the propagator who made the cutting had left on those buds at the base of the cutting, I would have shoots a yard high by now.

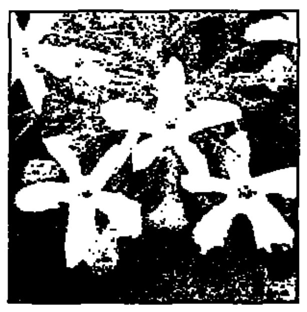
Another habit of nursery propagators is the rooting of three cuttings together in a pot, to make a great bushy potful quickly. Sage is the classic example. It roots so easily that three cuttings can be put straight into the two-litre pot in which the plant will be sold.

But it is a short-term expedient and not a good thing for the plants in later life. They live so close together that the competition at the root level is too fierce, and their lifespan is shortened considerably. Then if one plant dies you are left with a hole in the canopy. It is a technique best saved for short-term houseplants: garden shrubs are better grown as individuals.

Caryopteris 'First Choice'



Potentilla 'Gibson's Scarlet'

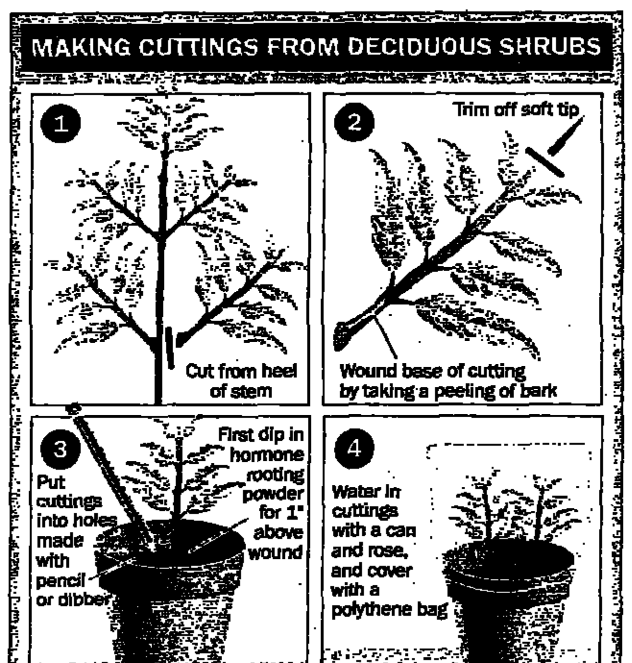


Abelia triflora

GARDEN PICTURE LIBRARY

Deutzia x kalmiiflora is a prime candidate for propagation, either from soft tip cuttings or semi-ripe shoots

MAKING CUTTINGS FROM DECIDUOUS SHRUBS


1
Cut from heel of stem
2
Trim off soft tip
Wound base of cutting by taking a peeling of bark
3
Put cuttings into holes made with pencil or dibber
First dip in hormone rooting powder for 1" above wound
4
Water in cuttings with a can and rose, and cover with a polythene bag

Liberal sprinkling of colour

ENGLISH HERITAGE

The Italian garden at Chiswick House, the Palladian villa in west London

OPEN THIS WEEKEND

■ 8 Dunstarn Lane, Adel, Leeds (0113-267 3938)

Twenty metres from causeway at ring road end. 28 and 28a buses stop near gate. Groups by appointment only. Open tomorrow for the Northern Horticultural Society and on July 20 for the National Gardens Scheme, 2-6pm. £1, children free; picnics allowed on lawn

Richard Wainwright, the former Liberal MP, was brought up in this house with its two-acre garden, created in 1937 by his father, Scurrah. In the centre of Leeds is Scurrah Gardens, a memorial to Wainwright senior. The Wainwright private garden only opens to the public three times a year and the main area includes 60 named varieties of delphiniums, plenty of phlox varieties, campanulas, some well-stocked herbaceous borders, wigwams of sweet peas and rose beds. All this is surrounded by a belt of old trees, lawn and rough grass.

"What pleases us most is when people visit with their children and grandchildren and have their picnics in the grassy areas or on the lawn. In 50 years of opening I have never had to pick up more than a few toffee papers after people have left," says Mr Wainwright junior, who runs the garden with his wife, Joyce.

■ Stancombe Park, Dursley, Gloucestershire (01453 542815)

Halfway between Dursley and Wotton-under-Edge on B4060. Open tomorrow for the charity the Distressed Gentlefolks Aid Association (DGAA Homelife), 2-6pm. £2.50; children £1

Stancombe is sited among the undulating Cotswolds, and the topography has been used to create an extraordinary garden of follies and secret gardens. The most remarkable area is a ten-acre secret garden concealed from the house by thick woodland. The history of the garden is sketchy but it is believed that the 19th-century owner, a vicar, David Edwards, created it as a love nest. A path runs from the main garden to a valley and then to woodland, where it plunges into a tunnel. On the far side of the tunnel are roses and yet more tunnels, a Doric temple and a steep hill. A lake is enclosed by willow, oak, copper beech, horse chestnut and poplar. In the main garden there is an abundance of roses including the new 'Constance Finn', which was bred for the centenary of DGAA Homelife. It is a floribunda with a spicy scent and up to 11 dusty pink flowers per stem. For more information about the rose contact the charity on 0171-396 6700.

■ Chiswick House, Burlington Lane, London W4 2RP (0181-995 0508)

Five miles west of central London, off A4. Open all year, 8.30am-dusk. Free

The twelfth Earl of Burlington recently opened the magnificent cascade at Chiswick House, so completing what his ancestors had tried and failed to do 260 years before. Most of the credit for this should go to English Heritage, which installed modern pumping systems, bought with funds from the National Lottery, to get the water feature to work. The cascade has a fall of 2.5m and is 1.5m wide. It was designed and built by William Kent in 1738, but the pumping system was not up to the job. In a letter to her mother at the time, the Earl's daughter wrote: "I was up on Saturday to see the chain pump work up the spring. The water comes in to the river very fast but it dries up in a minute."

Chiswick House is a Palladian villa, built in 1729, surrounded by stunning landscape. There is woodland, an Italian garden, a large lake, parterres and, closer by the house, more formal gardens with avenues of cypresses and of mop-head acacias. The conservatory is a Victorian addition. One of the best-loved areas of the garden is a white porticoed temple beside a circular pond, which is surrounded by orange trees in white tubs.

JANE OWEN

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Tailor-made for a Hardy annual

Jane Owen

discovers why the dressmaker and designer has a horror of lady gardeners

ME AND MY GARDEN: SIR HARDY AMIES

A path of gravel and stone paving leads to a stone-tiled pavilion

Sir Hardy Amies is to political correctness what King Herod was to child welfare. Age, which has mellowed the Cotswold stone of his converted schoolhouse in Oxfordshire, has not had the same effect on the 87 year old.

"You must be snobbish," he says. "For instance, you must never have those bright plants — busy lizzies — in the garden. And I hate herbaceous borders — they're like ladies whose hats have too many flowers."

The sideswipe is aimed at Gertrude Jekyll, the Edwardian goddess of colour schemes and herbaceous borders, and at professional lady gardeners "who never admit when they don't know something. It's penis envy you know — they cut off everything in sight".

This momentary peevishness may have something to do with the fact that Sir Hardy blames the demise of a specimen *Primula auricula* 'Hardy Amies' on a certain lady gardener. The plant is worth being irritated about: a black flower with a dazzling white centre circle, or "paste", against the pale green leaves.

The auricula passion — one he shares with George Harrison — began at the Chelsea Flower Show many years ago when he met Brenda Hyatt, an expert in these wonderful plants. Having, presumably, forgiven her for being a lady gardener, he learnt from her all he knows about the plant, from repotting to propagation. It was Ms Hyatt who named the gorgeous black auricula after Sir Hardy.

From a south-facing bench in his small walled garden, Sir Hardy directs his gardener, Kenneth Mildenhall, known as "Sam". The garden has been Sam's life for the past three years, and Sir Hardy's passion for the past 25 years.

There is no lawn — just gravel and stone paving with a central path leading up to a fine stone-tiled pavilion in the style of a dovecote. Tailored balls of bay, rosemary cut to show its "legs", lavender, roses and clematis mingle with tulips. There are white tobacco plants, including *Nicotiana sylvestris*, whose scent perfumes the walled garden on summer evenings. It is all Sir Hardy's design.

"I don't even know how to sew a dress," says the man who has been dressing the seriously rich for the past 51 years, "and I am not a dirt gardener but I have taught Sam all he knows." Roses were Sir Hardy's first love — crimson ones growing in his father's suburban Wembley garden. Now Sir Hardy has a collection of 160 roses including his favourite red, pink and white-striped *Rosa mundi*, which was first recorded 500 years ago.

His protestations at never lifting a green finger come undone when he admits to assiduous deadheading, which really amounts to pruning — "a light shaping in the late autumn and then again in spring". The rose collection lives with the auriculas a few hundred yards from Sir Hardy's main home, in the garden of what he calls "the Barn" — actually a grand spread including tennis court and greenhouses.

Having arrived for drinks at one house, an arm is offered and there is a gentle stroll across the village to the Barn for further drinks, passing on the way the enchanting Cotswold cottage where Sir Hardy's staff live. His sister, Rosemary, lives in the village too, as does Anneka Rice.

The auriculas live on a purpose-built stand under the eaves of the so-called barn. "They hate the rain but they can take frost," Sir Hardy says. I have about 120 show auriculas which have to be repotted every year. They look their best when they are four years old. They have to be watered from below. They like plenty of light but no direct sun, and they like some shade. But they hate heat." And he pots them in the Brenda Hyatt recommended mix of loam, peat, perlite, silver sand, slow-release fertiliser, charcoal, lime and gamma dust.

Plant obsessions are one thing. It is a rare talent that can make a useful garden which keeps up its appearance at every season. Sir Hardy says his main influences came from "the upper classes". As he puts it, having gone away to learn near-perfect French and German, he became a Deb's Delight and set about learning the language of the upper classes. He also drank in upper-class garden influences and adopted the maxim that flowers should never be seen from the house.

"Aspect is terribly important and you have to decide what you are going to do in a garden and where you are going to sit — a garden should be used, not just looked at."

And, from his upstairs bathroom window, he points out the south-facing bench where he has his evening drink. Even in February.

GILL ALLEN

Sir Hardy Amies studies his collection of roses and auriculas in his garden in Oxfordshire

The black-flowered *Primula auricula* 'Hardy Amies'

WEEKEND TIPS

- After flowering, prune old-fashioned and shrub roses, shortening back flowered shoots to a healthy bud or side shoot.
- Watch for the gingery spotting of rust on roses, mahonias and hypericums. Spray if necessary.
- Keep thirsty perennials, such as phlox and delphiniums, well watered before they wilt.
- Divide clumps of bearded irises of four years old or more. Replant only the fattest rhizomes, just on the surface and 9in apart, with the rhizome facing south to catch the sun.
- Cut out flowered stems of *Euphorbia robbiae* at ground level when the flowers have faded completely.
- Summer prune apples and pears, to allow the sun to ripen the fruit more fully.
- Stop cucumbers at the desired height and stop fruiting side-growths after the second leaf. Take off male flowers and those on the main stem. Shade in hot weather.
- Give ample water to courgettes, tomatoes, celery, sweetcorn and cauliflowers.

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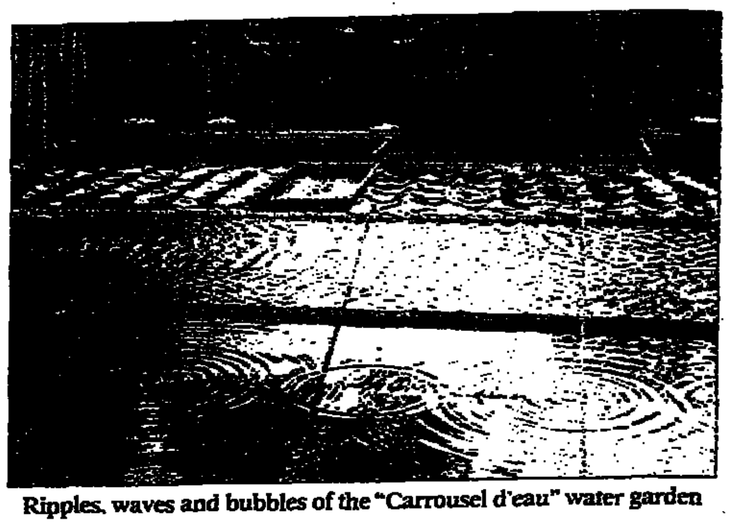
Jane Owen visits the sixth garden festival in Chaumont-sur-Loire and finds bizarre ideas for small gardens

Winners in the space race

JANE OWEN

Star attractions this year include a greenhouse supported by bamboo poles (left) and a mosaic spiral of pebbles designed by Takano (above)



Ripples, waves and bubbles of the "Carrousel d'eau" water garden

I have seen the future of gardening in small spaces and it will drive you up the wall. The Festival International des Jardins at Chaumont-sur-Loire in France is to the Chelsea Flower Show what Glyndebourne is to a rave. It is, in the words of Jean-Paul Pigeat, who started the annual extravaganza of 30 dramatic show gardens, "a cauldron of ideas and inspiration".

This year, the festival's sixth, the gardens range from a dotty derelict caravan oozing dampness and vegetation (by the sexy cult figure of French teenage life, Macha Makeief) to a serious rock-and-raked pebble Zen garden.

As always at these events, an unconscious theme has emerged — two actually. One is the use of the feathery plumes of bronze and green fennel in almost every planting scheme and the other is about gardening in small spaces.

The latter theme could be revolutionised by an idea from the green-haired Jarvis Cocker of the garden world, Patrick Blanc. He has planted his gardens up the sides of three free-standing walls of three to four metres high.

Moss and liverwort cling to the walls and ferns dangle their fronds towards the pools in which the walls stand, while studs of white and colour come from saxifraga, *Geranium macrorrhizum album* 'Spessart', *Campanula portenschlagiana*, *Heuchera* 'Palace Purple' and the exotic succulent, beschorneria. These living walls drip with moisture from a leaking pipe at the top of each structure. The nearest nature comes to this effect is along the deep narrow Cornish lanes where the banks and drystone walls ooze fecundity, or the strange Etruscan roads cut deep into the rock in an area north of Rome.

The technique mastered by M Blanc and his partner, architect Michel Mangematin, involves using waterproof glue to stick felt to a PVC surface. Pockets are cut into the felt and filled with soil and plants, and the surrounding area with mosses and liverworts. The walls took several years to establish — contrary to what lawn buffs may think, growing moss is not easy. You need a constant water supply — any of the widely available "leaking hose" systems will do — and dappled shade to help the moss to establish itself.

Another of the Chaumont exhibits is formed by two blocks of giant green pigeon holes. These run parallel to each other across a small reed-enclosed pond. In each of the pigeon holes is a lined wire-mesh plant holder containing, the makers say, "unusual varieties of vegetables", although many will be familiar to British gardeners — tomatoes, aubergines, coriander, basil, carrot, radish, cucumber, and everything else needed for a summer salad.

In between the two sets of pigeon holes is a hump-back bridge of wire mesh, a vantage point for visitors to see plant labels and plants close up. The designers, Yves Luthi, Vincent Soulié and Gert Yan de Jong, have made the supporting structure from scaffolding — which could be used in a limited space on a south-facing wall.

Another exhibit, "Babylones" by Beatrice Fauny and Benoit Sejournes, is a hanging garden which again could work well in a small area. Twelve rusty steel flower baskets are supported on stilts about three metres high. Palms (*Phoenix canariensis*) are planted at each corner with the planters erupting with luscious vegetation, from agapanthus to a range of chrysanthemum. Scaffolding is used for the supporting structure and the weight of the planters is reduced by using a lining of expanded polystyrene (which also helps protect the roots from extremes of temperature) and polystyrene balls mixed with the soil.

> 'Contrary to what lawn buffs think, growing moss is not easy'

Like Chelsea, Chaumont is more about ideas and excellence than about selling, although exhibitors at Chelsea sometimes use it as their market place for the coming year, and those at Chaumont usually receive commissions based on their work at the show. There may be more show gardens at Chaumont than at Chelsea, but there is far more space — there are no plant or lawn mower stands, no irrigation system displays or bookshops. And the most popular gardens are often invited back the following year.

Every year, about 250 entries are received in early autumn for the 30 places. These are judged by a panel of gardeners and designers, including the head gardener at Chaumont, who decides whether an entrant has the technical and horticultural know-how to keep his or her exhibit looking good from now until October.

The budget is tight: Fr2,000 (about £2,100) for the designer and Fr80,000 (£84,000) maximum to create the garden, awarded by Chaumont, which receives regional grants. These are modest figures compared with Chelsea, which gives no money to its show gardens but estimates that some gardens cost up to £100,000.

One of the most expensive gardens at Chaumont this year is by the Japanese landscaper Takano, who works on vast municipal projects in Japan, North America and France in everything from snow and ice to mosaic. At Chaumont, he has used pebbles, stones and bricks to form a racing whirlpool of water over three stone spirals. The source of the water is ten metres up an oak tree, with the water allowed to pour along a chain to the highest point of the garden below.

Takano's fame certainly helped to ease budgetary problems. "Volunteers have flown in from Japan to help with construction," Takano told me after he'd asked what time I was starting work on his garden.

One of the most surprising gardens at the show appears at first to be an impenetrable bamboo jungle. Against the beech hedge that surrounds this and all the gardens you suddenly see a tiny dirt path. This leads through the jungle to a soft, bubble-like greenhouse with a pool at its centre that is straddled by a rusty metal footbridge. Random bamboo poles prop up the greenhouse from the inside, echoing the jungle outside. It is the brainchild of Duncan Lewis, a former Royal College of Art student, and architect Atelier de l'Entrepôt.

This, like several other gardens, appeared last year, but has been adapted because the show organisers felt that the planting had to be improved. The organisers also asked Michele Elsair and Jean-Pierre Delettre to continue showing their "Carrousel d'eau" because it was so popular last year. It is a strange water garden in five sections, each with its own pattern of water: regular drips from five short hoses radiate ripples in one pool, bubbles erupt lazily from another and waves from another. Each section has large metal planters containing a monoplanting of anything from duckweed to nasturtiums.

Another garden retained from 1996 by popular demand is Judy and David Drew's living willow-wall, in which they have created a willow-stem trellis in a geometric pattern of walkways, with the willow leaves forming a canopy.

Visitors all want to know how it is done so here is the designers' recipe: drive willow stakes into the ground at the end of March and weave them into the desired pattern. And that's it. A rich clay soil usually guarantees success.

GARDEN FESTIVAL FACT FILE

■ The author travelled with Thomson Citybreaks (0171-200 8900). Prices from £229 per person per night based on B&B and twin room sharing, and include Eurostar or flights from Heathrow. Hotel Scribe, 1 Rue Scribe (00 33 0144 712 424) has a £17 per night single-room supplement.

■ For more information about the Festival International des Jardins, which runs until October 19, or for information about entering next year's show, contact Conservatoire International des Parcs et Jardins et du Paysage, Ferme du Château, 41150 Chaumont-sur-Loire (00 33 0254 209 922). Central reservation number for groups, which will sometimes be given an English-speaking guide: 00 33 0148 048 459. Group price: Fr35 (about £3.70), otherwise Fr45 (£4.80). Telephone ahead to find out about practical workshops, which are arranged for most days. Price Fr549 (£58) including lunch, or Fr449 (£47) for horticultural societies.

■ There is a regular train service to Chaumont-sur-Loire (sometimes having to change at Blois) from Gare Austerlitz in Paris. Chaumont-sur-Loire is 17km from Blois and 185km from Paris. Motorway A10 exit, Blois or Ambroise. It is also a 45-minute drive from Villandry, which has one of the most famous vegetable gardens in the world. Villandry is 15km west of Tours (00 33 0247 500 209).

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W14 Lux 2 bed mais, £315pw inc pkg, gdn, Sat TV, 1 min tube. 0966 400791 or 0956 545474.

KENSINGTON W8
Detached, romantic period hse with lge garage in quiet, exclusive backwater surrounded by trees. Stunning views. 30ft s/facing recep with 3 French windows to sunny terrace(26x12ft). 2 lge bdr suites (19x20ft) with marble bathrm. Dining rm/bed 3. Paved garden. Immaculate. Freehold [illegible]
0171 6025941

SW10
Large Terraced House.
Open plan - 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, double recep room, family room, kitchen, laundry room, study, storage room, cellar, garden. Freehold
Priv sale £875,000
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or 0831 36 1467.

QUEENGATE TERRACE SW7
Prime position penthouse flat ideal for rental. South facing views with direct lift access. 2/3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms (2 e/s), double aspect reception room, kitchen/breakfast room, roof terrace. Share of F/H. Quick sale
£405,000.
Tel: 0171 385 1418

SW10
Unmodernised 4 storey property for sale.
Possible potential for conversion into
5 x Two bedroom flats.
Enquiries.
0181 995 9506.

VICARAGE GATE
Attractive spacious 2nd floor flat, 1 double bedroom, reception, fitted kitchen, bathroom, extensive cupboard space throughout, excellent decorative order, lift, porter, security cameras, 8 min Tube. 985 year lease.
Private Sale
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FROGNAL NW3
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LONDON FIELDS E8
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4 bedrooms, bathroom, reception room, downstairs WC, spacious kitchen/dining room
Superb 70' garden
£189,500 F/H
HOTBLACK & COMPANY
0171 226 0160

BERKSHIRE

EASTBURY Pretty cottage, 3 beds, 2 receps, garden, quiet position, £170,000. Lane Fox 01488 686001.

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

HIGH WYCOMBE
London 30 miles.
Spacious 1 bed flat in exclusive development. Large fitted kitchen, over looking woodland. Lounge with Balcony. Allocated Parking. Entry phone. Communal garden. Easy access to M40 & M25. Various golf courses nearby. £75,000 ono
Tel: 01494 444336 H
0171 3256770 W

SEEKING CHARMING OLD PROPERTY?
Unique Victorian Cottage 'detached mews style' sgl storey, nooks crannies. Conserv. Area(Thames) M4-M40, shops, station. Incl. halls, lounge, dining, cloak. 2 beds each en suite, courtyard gdn, good pkg, gfch, log fire, quiet location. Guide: £159,500 freehold.
Tel:01628 525309(h) 0831 786093(mobile).

ESSEX

EVERY WOMANS DREAM. Det hse West Essex. 4 beds (2 e/s), d/stairs cloak (WC), open plan lounge, dining rm, spacious fitted antique pine kitchen & dining area, GCH, det dble gge (all services), secluded established gdn, c/s amenities (BR & greenbelt 5 mins), must be viewed. £160,000. 01708 375287 (ans)

COUNTRY PROPERTY

LIVE IN TODAYS WORLD IN GENTLE DORSET
Only 1½ hours from M25 fabulous modern Penthouse for those who believe in style, vibrancy, colour & positive living. User-friendly, peaceful, it envigorates, rejuvinates. Enchanting views from main rooms and secluded roof garden are really unique. All benefiting from the beauty, values, politness and care of traditional town life.
Suitable as a base for creative energy & peace away from London but within easy travelling distance. With new styles of communications both now and in the near future an ideal base. Or a weekend/holiday home? 2000 sq ft of enticing accomodation with New York style luxurious kitchen, large living space, 3/4 dble bedrooms, security, parking etc. etc. £165,000
SEE ON INTERNET under [illegible]
Please send for a brochure to see what it is all about to:
GILYARD SCARTH 01747 851122/ FAX 851113
or out of office hours 0181 761 2726/ FAX 761 2725.

ESSEX

HORNCHURCH
Corner 5 bed double-fronted detached house with side land potential for nursing home subject to pp. 57K spent on refurbishment, detached garage, workshop, reception, dining room, ground floor WC. 5 beds, bathroom, within M25, central London 15 miles, greenbelt 1 mile. £198,500.
Tel:01708 459 185
or 0956 442 559

CHESHIRE

CHESHIRE
A 7000 sq ft, unique, modern detached house in grounds of just under 1 acre. Startling in concept, dramatic in presentation and opulent in finish. A low-energy design classic with light, airy, neo-classical interiors. A stunning highly liveable departure from the ordinary. Motorway 2 miles, Manchester Airport 13 miles.
Offers around £700,000
Ashall Barnett - 01925 [illegible]

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

CITY OF ELY
Station style 3 bedroom bungalow with 1/5 acre of mature garden in secluded area. Very long and spacious dining area, 38ft garage/workshop, bathroom, fully fitted kitchen/breakfast room, entrance hallway, lots of potential for development. Gas/Storage Central Heating. 15 mins walk from BR Station, 10 mins City centre.
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Lang & Co 01752 256000

HAMPSHIRE

TEST VALLEY VILLAGE £240,000. Older style home with lovely countryside views offering 4 beds + sep annexe & garaging to approx 1 acre + additional 3 acre paddock for nominal rent adjoining. Fox & Sons Winchester 01962 862121

THE WALLOPS Refurbished stable blk in attractive rural village setting 3 beds, 24' rec, lge kit/din, just under 1 acre gdns. Extra grazing land up to 10 acres if req OIRO £200,000 John Jeffrey 01722 335337

ABBOTTSANN HAMPSHIRE
Set in 2½ Acres of delightful south facing Gardens, overlooking the river.
5 Bedroom Country House, 4 reception rooms, 4 bathrooms (3 En-Suite), Study, conservatory. Double garage, heated pool, Hard tennis court and Sauna.
Convenient for Motorway and Mainline Station
Offers Invited for the Freehold
Tel/Fax:01264 710360

HERTFORDSHIRE

ALDENHAM Green Belt hamlet with good access M1 & M25; Lovingly restored barns. Last few. 2,3 & 4 beds fr £219,500 to £435,000. 01923 850308

THATCHED. Barn conversion, 3 bed, 3 recep, 2 bath. Vacant £189,950 call 01923 268166 A

LITTLE CROWN VILLAGE
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Wonderful horseriding country.
Exceptionally pretty 3 bedroom cottage, totally restored with many pine features & pine spiral staircase.
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KENT

CANTERBURY see Land for Sale

EAST FARLEIGH Grade II Georgian house. 3 receps, 5 beds, 2 ensuite, 1 f/bath, semi basement, subject p.p. Ideal for extra rooms or s/c annexe. £365,000. Country Property (Open 7 days) 01580 211888.

ROLVENDEN. Magnificent equestrian country house c18 acres, 6 recs, cellars, 8 beds, 5 baths etc. Stables, barn, s/pool, tennis crt, £1.2 m. Country Property (open 7 days). 01580 211888

FARNINGHAM KENT
Ctry residence set in 5 Acres o/look the Darenth Valley, superbly maintained comprising of 3 recep, 3 bath, 5 DT bed, a 22ft by 22ft kit & st rm. Games room, dressing rm & 5th bed, every room with views. Burglar & Fire alm. landscaped grounds with S/Pool & Bowling Green. Private drive protected by e/gates. Situated on the edge of the vge. Easy reach of M/ways & BR. 7 mls to 7/oaks. 15 mls to London. offers ar £725,000
Tel:01322 864577

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Tel:01322 864577

COUNTRY PROPERTY

Leyburn Hall
Wensleydale, North Yorkshire
Beautifully appointed small Palladian Country House. Superb situation on edge of town with panoramic views across Wensleydale
Comprises 5 reception rooms, music room, kitchen and usual offices.
Principal bedroom, dressing and bathroom, 6 further beds, 2 further baths and lift.
Separate staff accommodation of kitchen/dining, sitting room, 2 beds, bath and shower room.
Gardens, small paddock and outbuildings, extending in all to almost three acres.
For sale freehold as a whole, or could split
Guide Price: £525,000
Blenkin & Co
29 High Petergate, York. 01904-671672

Eagles VALE Snaresbrook
Vale of Dreams
A rare opportunity to live in the superb conversion of Snaresbrook House; 15 luxury apartments throughout the Grade II listed building, situated within a conservation area. Close to Snaresbrook Central line station, the journey to the City and West End takes around 20 minutes. The M11 and M25 are also within easy reach.
2 & 3 BED APARTMENTS £150,000 - £230,000
3 BEDROOM COACH HOUSE £230,000
3 BEDROOM COTTAGE £220,000
LODGE HOUSE £300,000
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OPEN DAILY FROM 10AM TO 5PM
Weston Homes Plc
SALES OFFICE 0181 530 8081

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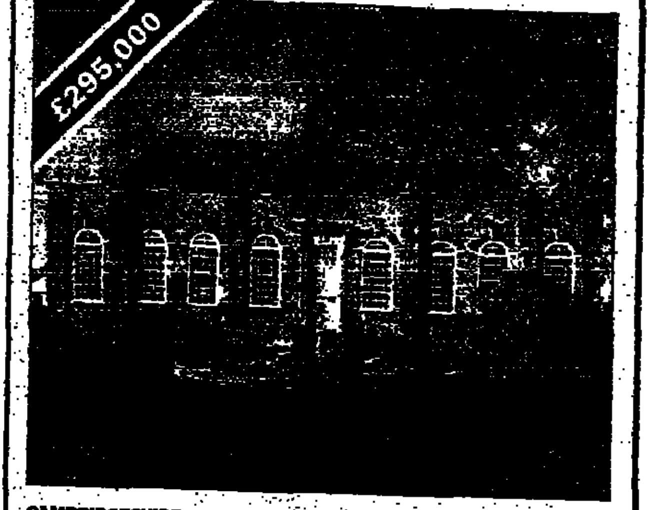
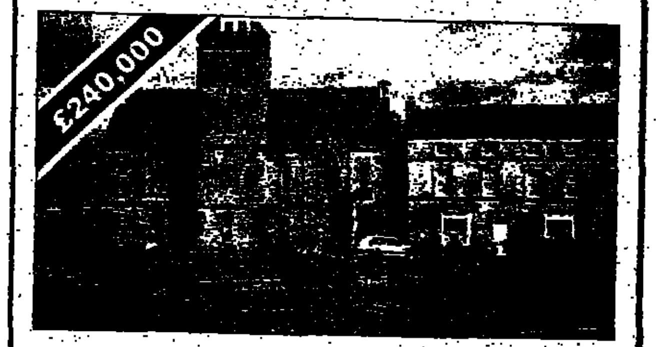
FOR SALE

SCHOOLHOUSES



CAMBRIDGESHIRE
The School House, Chippenham, near Newmarket. Grade II* listed Queen Anne converted former schoolhouse in an outstanding 0.79 acre garden with views over Chippenham Park. Four bedrooms; two bathrooms, drawing room, dining room, kitchen/breakfast room, utility, cloakrooms and vaulted cellars. Summerhouse and alpine house. About £295,000 (Bidwells, 01223 841842).



NORTH YORKSHIRE
The Old School House, Middleham. Large Grade II listed Victorian former school house, currently a residential art centre, bookshop and tea room, comprising 17 rooms (many facing Middleham Castle), bell tower, former school playground, rose beds and outbuildings. About £240,000 (Pavilions of Splendour, 0181-348 1234).

BERKSHIRE
Barrow Deep, Eastbury, Hungerford. Charming Grade II listed former headmaster's house attached to the old village school house, with an attractive mature garden. Three bedrooms, bathroom, sitting room, dining room and kitchen. Outhouse. About £170,000 (Lane Fox, 01488 686001).

CHERYL TAYLOR

SELLING POINTS — SHEDS

George Shields's 55mph garden shed on wheels

GARDEN STORE, tool room, workshop, den, doghouse, apple store, hobbyhouse, garden room ... the shed, for all its size, is a richly versatile building. Ask George Shields. Last week he showed off his motorised shed on wheels capable of doing 55mph. The stationary version may look humble and plain, but it is an asset well worth acquiring.

A shed can be tucked away discreetly in a corner, or it can enhance the garden by filling an awkward, ugly space. Essential requirements are a flat, hard surface and enough space to open the door. Unless you are keen on DIY or have fussy specifications, there is little point in building your own. DIY and garden centres stock a range of wooden, flat-pack, self-assembly sheds which will work out cheaper if you consider the savings on your time. The smallest 6ft by 4ft sheds start at about £120.

Before buying, consider the uses for the shed to help define style, size, and door and window configurations.

THE GROUND should be level, firm and watertight. Although self-assembly sheds come ready treated, apply more preservative to the underside of the floor before laying it. Most sheds come unlined, so consider adding insulation. And check that your insurance will cover items in an outdoor building.

Now comes the fun part: customising it. All those happy hours to be spent putting up shelves, ledges, hooks and pegs so you can make pleasing arrangements of boxes of nails and tools. Such attention to detail impresses potential house buyers, who will assume you have applied the same diligence to the upkeep of the house.

For the same reason, do not ignore the exterior. A ramshackle shed may look quaintly rural to you, but to a buyer may look worryingly uncared for. Simple wood stain is smart, while picking out the door and window frames in the same colour as the house adds style. Alternatively, you could brighten an unremarkable garden or dull view by painting the shed in bold, vibrant colours. A brick-laid path around the base, tubs of flowers or trellis screen can turn it into a garden feature.

HELEN PICKLES

Alex O'Connell marvels at minimalist principles used to create maximum effect

Urban living stripped bare

There are two types of people: those who wash up before they've even finished eating and hang up their clothes as they peel them off, and those who allow dishes to pile Empire State high and carpet their floor with the latest ready-to-wear collection. Minimalist housing is made for the former and the accurately titled, modernist home The Building (just try asking for directions in the local fish'n'chip shop) has been built for the sort who iron their boxer shorts, label their drawers and would like to Dettox the world.

"Minimal, luminous with a Zen-like quality" is not a phrase I'd use to describe southeast London, let alone Deptford High Street. So it is fair to say that award-winning architect Mark Guard's two-storey, two-bedroom minimalist design (originally a 19th-century coach house) is an unusual find. Reached down a cobbled side street, wedged in between a modern estate and in sight of Thomas Archer's St Paul's church, it is a tribute to form and function.

Potential buyers should probably not take their grandparents to view. Guard's team specialise in the development of an "elegant, functional, modern aesthetic". So the floors are a mixture of concrete and linoleum and the gravelly courtyard and roof terrace owe their ambience to a particular municipal car park I know. Having said that, when the church bells chime and the sun sets in the early evening, the shadows on the white walls reminded me of Bruce Chatwin's photos of Morocco. This is the sort of place where the pale, well-coiffured David Bowie in *The Man Who Fell to Earth* might finally have felt at home.

> This is the sort of place where The Man Who Fell to Earth might have felt at home

It is a topsy-turvy house: on the ground floor there are two bedrooms and a bathroom. Although the second bedroom and bathroom are smallish, the master bedroom is light and stark — little wonder it has been used for futuristic fashion shoots and pop videos. The owners have a bed so big you could play human noughts and crosses in it and still get a good night's sleep.

Earlier in the year, the sheets were ruffled by the pop-star Peter Andre, who used the house as backdrop for his *I Feel You* video. So tanned boys there are, but tall-boys and chests of drawers are nowhere to be found. The shower and stainless steel lavatory behind the bed are the only other solid objects in the "space".

The shower is so powerful it could scrub up a tar-coated Vietnamese pot-bellied pig in a mo, although it has no doors (a trait of minimalist architecture), so the bashful should learn to whistle or enrol on an "improve your self-image" weekend.

But why go away when you can clear your head across the courtyard in the "shiatsu" room? Climb onto the futon and listen to the sound of silence (bar a few lorries chugging down the high street). The spiritually challenged should buy a long table and turn it into a dining room. The courtyard itself is surrounded by a four-metre high wall; silver birches and Scots pines grow in between the gravel; fairground fish swim in a mini-stream and an outdoor shower allows you to recreate the freedom of the nudist beach in your own back garden. It is the perfect place to recite *haiku* with Ray-Ban-wearing Buddhist monks.

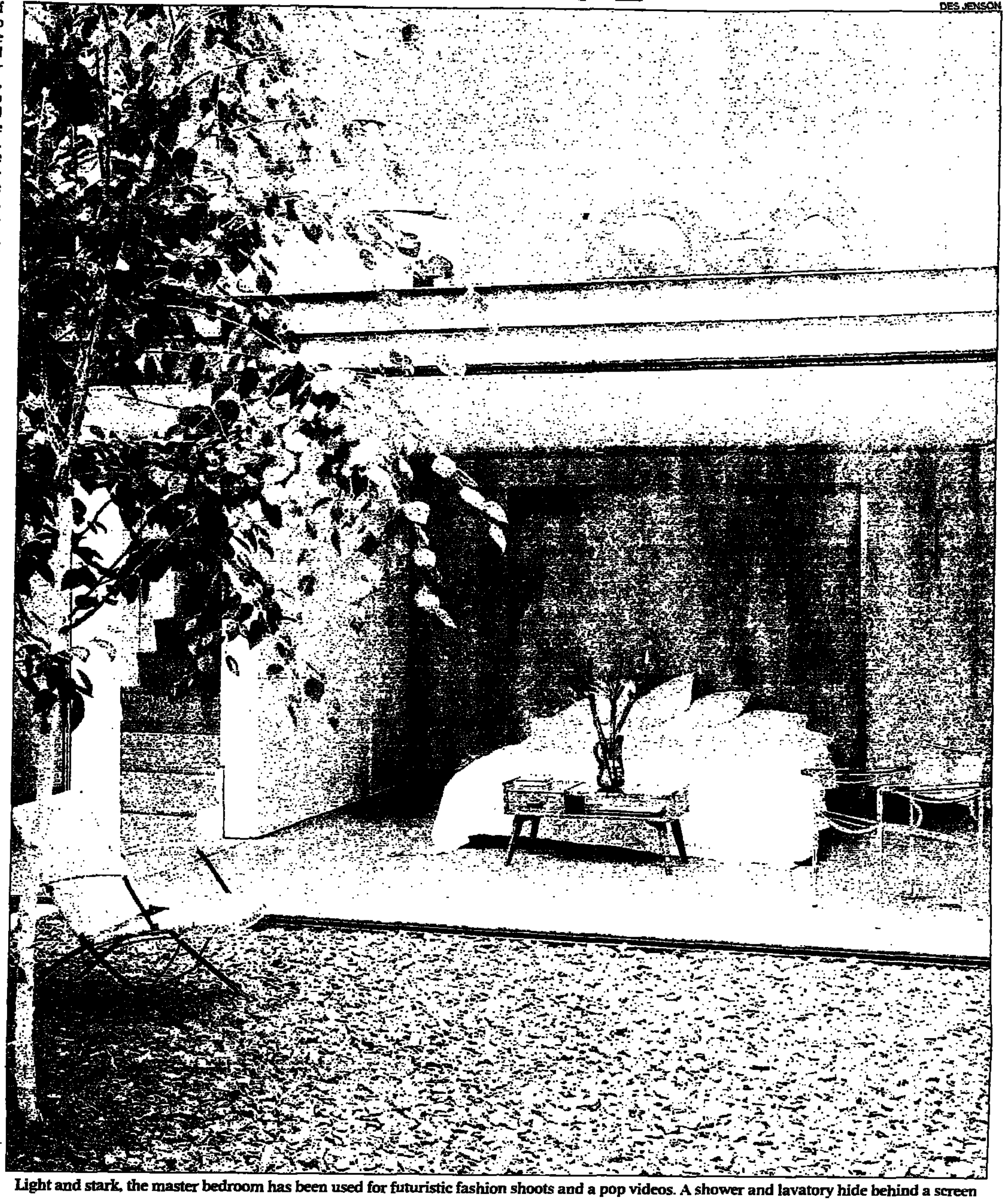
Upstairs, the Living Area has sliding double-glazed panels looking out over the courtyard, and the less than elegant Deptford skyline. At the moment it is dominated by a zebra-skin rug, a long, glass bench, and a shapely orange, plastic chair made by the Seventies Italian designer responsible for the white, spin-me-round seat in Ken Russell's *Tommy*. Book-hoarders beware: there are no open bookshelves. Although the ample cupboard space might allow the prospective buyer to hide those vanity publishing titles, the opportunity to impress high-brow dinner guests with that all-too-visible copy of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (German edition) may pass you by.

The kitchen is all glass and stainless steel. A sliding floor-to-ceiling panel behind the sink creates a disconcerting sense of wall-lessness. The round sink reminded me of a bad trip to the dentist. I wanted to spit pink mouthwash nervously into it. Instead I admired the Bosch multi-function oven, although I'm not sure if you're meant to eat in a house like this, let alone rustle up a lasagne. I wouldn't be surprised if the owners wired themselves up to a glucose drip when they get a bit peckish.

This is the futuristic world of Zanussi promos, where everyone wears Issey Miyake and severe-looking glasses to worship at the stripped-pine shrine of hip. Their idea of a Good Night In: tweaking each other with natural wood chopsticks, in time to the wails of Brian Eno.

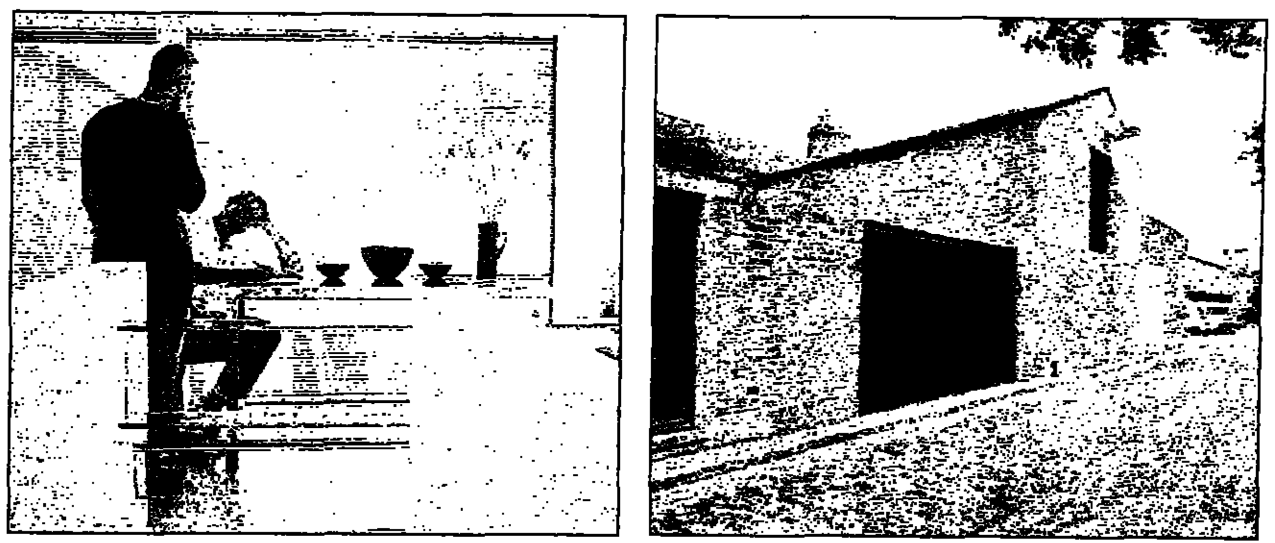
Never mind chucking out your chintz, this house turns the phrase "fully-furnished" on its head and pushes it to the back of one of its expansive, hidden cupboards.

● *Agent: Winkworths, Blackheath 0181-852 0999.*



DES JENSON

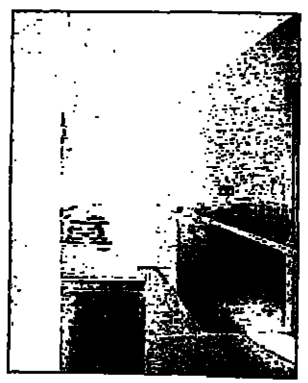
Light and stark, the master bedroom has been used for futuristic fashion shoots and a pop videos. A shower and lavatory hide behind a screen



Sliding glass panels in the living area let you look out over the courtyard and forget you're in a south London side street

HOUSE OF THE WEEK

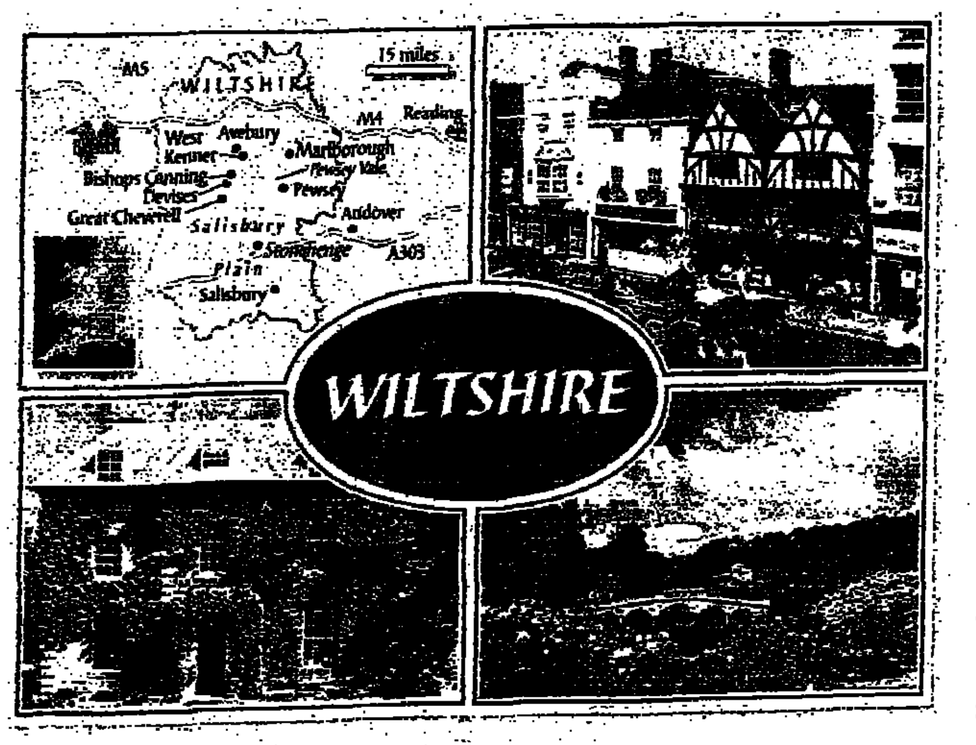
The Building, Mary Anne Gardens, London SE8
● **Price:** £300,000
● **Shopping:** secondhand kitsch and soily vegetables at Deptford market, excellent tailor on Deptford High Street (he makes all of Vic'n'Bob's suits), Greenwich market for vintage clothing and ethnic tat.
● **Entertainment:** pubs aplenty. Greenwich for the maritime enthusiast. Gigs at the nearby Albany Empire
● **Travel:** ten minutes' walk to Greenwich town centre, two minutes to Deptford BR station with services to London Bridge, Charing Cross and Cannon Street (journey 7-15 minutes).



Kitchen in glass and steel

PROPERTY PROFILE: WILTSHIRE

A weekly look at the property market around Britain



Attractions: Stonehenge, Avebury, the West Kennet Long Barrow and Salisbury, the rolling countyside of the Salisbury Plain and the downs ... Wiltshire is a haven for historians and rural aficionados alike. Commuters are lured by fast train services from towns like Pewsey, while second-home owners appreciate its good road links, including the A303, with the M4 to the north. Sought after areas include the Pewsey Vale and Marlborough Downs, and villages such as Easton Royal and Bishops Cannings, according to Humberts in Pewsey.

The market: definitely hot, with agents quoting rises of between 10 and 20 per cent in the past year. Dreweatt Neate in Marlborough has 40 properties on its books in the Marlborough area and 800 applicants, and reckons shortage of stock is fuelling rises. Many deals end up as sealed bids or best and final offers, according to John D. Wood. The market fell by up to 40 per cent between 1989 and 1992, says Strutt & Parker in Salisbury. Prices began to rise in mid-1995, and are now above peak 1988 prices for good country houses.

Expect to pay: £155,000 to £180,000 for a three-bedroom cottage; £350,000 to £400,000 for a farmhouse with two acres and £600,000-plus for a medium-size country house, according to Savills in Salisbury. Savills reckons you will pay 15 per cent extra for properties in the Nadder Valley, and 10 per cent extra for those within a few miles of the M4 and A303. Around three quarters of sales are to Londoners, many looking for second homes, says Strutt & Parker.

Significant sales: Dreweatt Neate was swamped with calls after the Old Rectory, in Great Cheverell, south of Devizes, appeared in *Country Life*. Three weeks and 58 viewers later, the house, priced at £500,000, went to best and final offers, and sold for closer to £600,000.

Outlook: good, says Savills, which expects the county to hold its own over the next few months, while Humberts reckons demand will continue to outstrip supply even if 20 per cent more properties come on to the market.

AMANDA LOOSE

● *Next Saturday's property profile: Lincolnshire*

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How to avoid that sinking feeling

Homes by the sea may seem romantic but they can be fraught with hazards, says **Emma Haughton**

Last November, East Yorkshire County Council arrived at Sue Earle's three-bedroom Victorian farmhouse, took a few measurements, then gave her four days to leave and ordered her to demolish her home. The house, a mile south of Mappleton on the Holderness coast, was just four metres from the cliff edge, and considered too dangerous to inhabit.

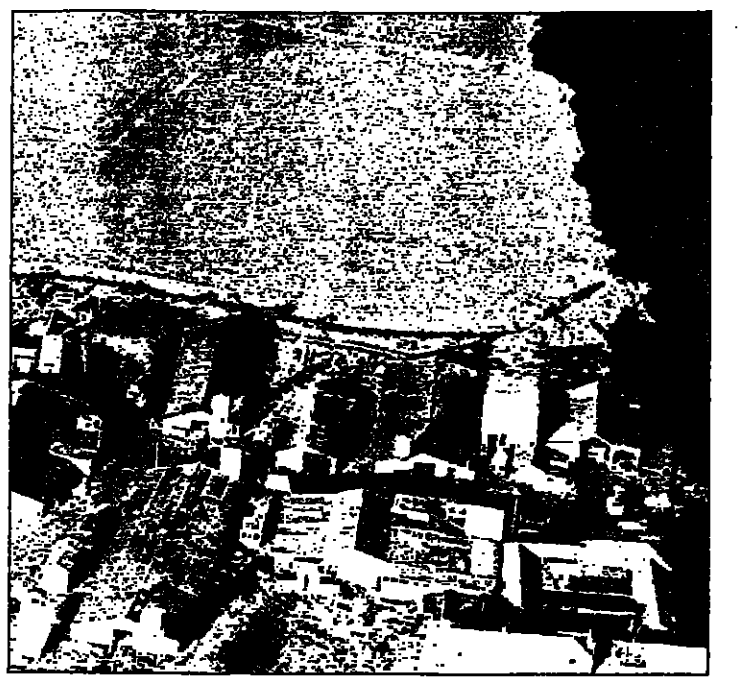
Ms Earle, who now lives in a caravan, is suing for compensation. She believes that sea defences built in 1991 to protect Mappleton increased the rate of erosion on her land from a couple of metres a year to six or seven.

"They built two rock groynes at Mappleton. This stops sediment coming onto the beach, so the cliff erodes faster because there is no beach to protect it," she says. "In one place we lost 20 metres in one year. I knew I'd lose the house eventually, but if the rate of erosion had stayed as it was, we would have had another ten to 15 years. I feel very angry. Nobody should lose their home to the sea and get nothing." She says it will cost her at least £50,000 to build a new house.

At least Ms Earle always knew her home was in danger and has some chance of compensation. Others, seduced by romantic prospects of a home by the sea, pay a premium for the privilege only to find it turn into a liability when their houses are threatened by erosion or flooding, or they have to pay high maintenance bills to keep out the rigours of salt and sea, with window frames and doors requiring constant attention.

"Some people put their life savings into a seaside bungalow and lose everything," says Chris Matthews, design engineer for East Yorkshire, which has the fastest eroding coastline in Europe: a recent report suggested the council should simply allow some villages to disappear into the sea.

"We hear stories where people have been told that the house they are buying 50 metres from the edge will last 1,000 years, but ten years down the line their front door is right on the cliff top."



The encroaching coastline, in 1994 (above) and in 1972 (below)

Problems with coastal homes are not isolated to East Yorkshire. According to Diane Dumashie, a chartered surveyor specialising in coastal development, Britain is tilting along a line running roughly from Norfolk and the Wash to Bristol, with everything to the north rising slightly, and everything to the south falling. "It's a very small drop," she says, "but it is occurring."

Small it may be, but add in the increased number of storms over the past ten years and the forecast 40cm rise in sea levels around Britain over the next 50 years, and you have a significant problem, says Dr Andrew Dlugolecki, a general manager of insurers General Accident and an authority on global warming. "The slight rise in the land will cancel out sea level rises in northerly areas such as Scotland, but in the South East it will be doubly worse because the land is sinking and the sea level is rising," he says. "Severe storms can raise the sea level even higher than 40cm above its normal height for short periods, with terrible results."

The northeast coast of England, however, is especially vulnerable, largely due to its particular rock formation. Other areas most at risk are those on the coast of Kent, East Anglia, the South East, and around the Thames Wash, including homes beside tidal rivers.

Unfortunately, homeowners may find little help is at hand if the worst does happen. With storms, flooding and water damage accounting for nearly a third of all claims in England, according to a NatWest Insurance Services report, insurers are increasingly reluctant to insure homes in high-risk areas, especially if the property has a history of claims. And if the problem is coastal erosion, you are unlikely to be covered at all.

"The insurance industry is spending a lot of money and time trying to make sure it can still cover people in high-risk areas," Mr Dlugolecki says, "but it does depend how much the Government and coastal authorities are prepared to invest in ensuring these coastlines are defended."

Just how much will be spent on coastal defence is also a headache for Vivienne Jolliffe and her partner John Parker, who live in one of three former Admiralty cottages perched on the cliff edge in the hamlet of Seatown, on the Dorset coast. Their view of the sea, framed by cliffs and the imposing peak of Golden Cap, is magnificent, and from the living room you can hear the sea sighing and rolling.'

ASADOUR GUZELIAN

Down and out: Sue Earle in the ruins of her clifftop farmhouse, for which she is seeking compensation

But how much longer they can enjoy it all has hung in the balance since a large piece of their garden fell away three years ago, leaving the cliff edge just five metres from the house. Their fate now rests in the hands of West Dorset District Council and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF). Unless MAFF grants the council the £300,000 needed to provide sea defences, the owners may be forced to abandon their homes, each worth more than £100,000 — and they would not be eligible for compensation.

Others, however, have no prospect at all of a coastal cavalry coming to the rescue. "There is the expectation that if something goes wrong, somebody will do something about it," says John Ribey, principal engineer at Scarborough Borough Council, where four years ago a hotel slipped off the cliffs of the North Yorkshire town. "A lot of people think there is an authority they can turn to if things go wrong, but there isn't. Coastal councils have a responsibility to look at coastal protection, but no obligation to put right any problems."

MAFF, which provides grants for sea defence (this includes measures such as sea walls or cliff drainage, to lower the water table), demands that the cost of any work is less than the value of any property or assets it will save, and that any scheme will not have a detrimental environmental impact. "There is now a presumption to let nature take its course rather than embark on hard engineering," Mr Ribey says. "If you protect the area concerned, it may have an adverse effect on another area down the coast."

Even if your home is protected by established sea defences, you should not be complacent. With many defences more than 100 years old and built at a lower level than anyone imagined would be overcome, it is likely they will be breached with increasing frequency over the coming years.

So what should homebuyers do to protect themselves from making a purchase they might live to regret? If you are going to buy a property in a high-risk area, get a full structural survey from a qualified local surveyor, Ms Dumashie says, and be prepared to bring in a specialist surveyor if necessary.

She also suggests you do some homework of your own. The local Environment Agency office will have plans for coastal defence and flood control, while the council engineering department should have details of local erosion rates over a number of years.

In addition, it is wise to check whether you will be able to get sufficient building and contents insurance. According to David Lennan, head of retail insurance at NatWest Insurance Services, many insurers will negotiate tailor-made policies which may, for instance, exclude damage by flooding. In which case it may come down to taking a calculated risk. "Lots of people live in flood areas but they're prepared for the worst," he says. "They have stone floors and rugs rather than expensive fitted carpets, and they stick to furniture they can move easily in a flood."

This may be fine for the stout-hearted, but is unlikely to offer much peace of mind to anyone who has read *Mill on the Floss*.

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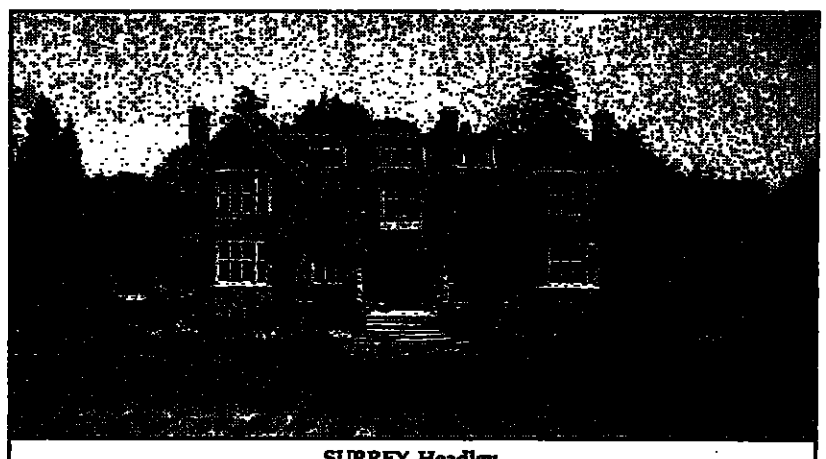

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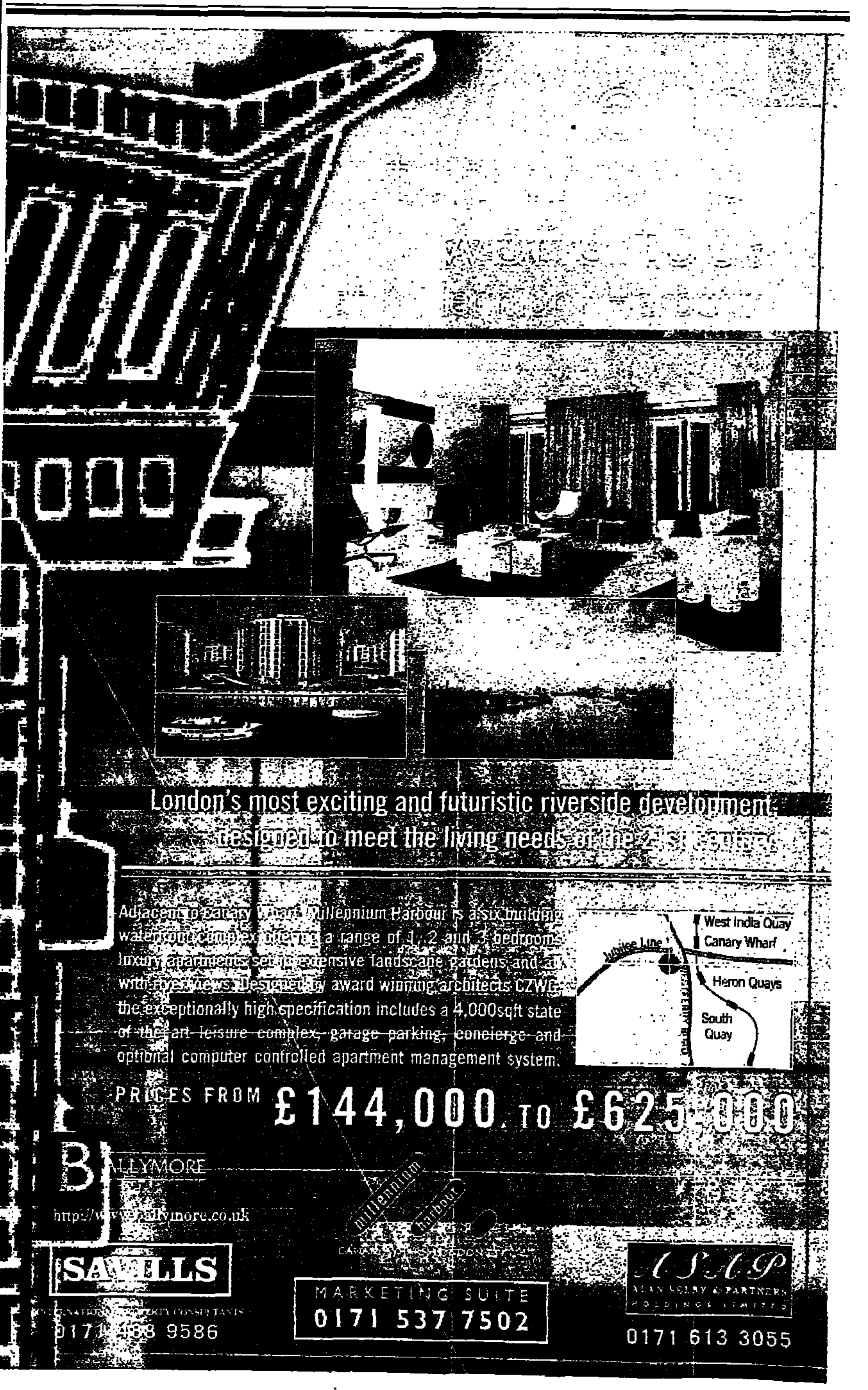

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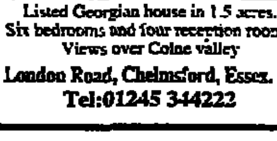

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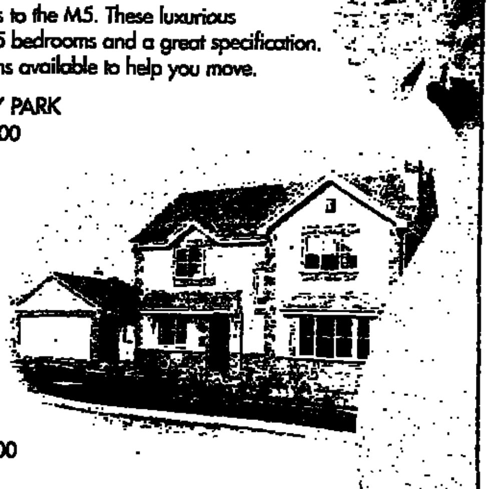

A typical 4 bedroom detached home

On an Irish march where the only foe is a blister

Ronald Faux on why County Mayo attracts a very different kind of marcher

ROLY SMITH

Pleasure: more than 1,000 people from all over the world joined the Castlebar marches this year

Pain: some of the 2,000 Orangemen who marched at Drumcree before the riots began last Sunday

The contrast could not be sharper the example more compelling. On the day that the Drumcree march left its hateful wake in Northern Ireland, across the border in County Mayo more than 1,000 Roman Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Shintoists, believers and the religiously uncommitted marched together for no political reason.

They marched simply for companionship and the sheer delight of setting one foot in front of the other. From more than 20 countries as far distant as the Falkland Islands and Japan, and aged from eight to more than 80, they were the long, short and the tall, overweight and underweight, striders and shufflers, all taking part in the Castlebar International Four Days' Walk.

For 31 years this famous meeting has brought together marching enthusiasts to ramble *en masse* along country lanes and over boggy mountainsides, following routes up to 40 kilometres (25 miles) long; chattering, arguing, nursing their blisters together and, at the end of the day, sending local sales of Guinness into a ballistic curve.

"There are no losers no winners. No one is interested in your title, *rank or religion, your class or your* creed. We are plain and simple people who enjoy walking and feel it does us good," says Ernie Sweeney, a founder-walker of the Castlebar event. "I would invite everyone from both sides of the divide in Drumcree to come to Castlebar, swap stories, share their sandwiches, help each other with their blistered feet and get to know one another. That has always been a sure way to understanding one another as human beings."

Mr Sweeney, an Irish Catholic, met his wife Susana, a Dutch Lutheran, when he helped her out of a bog on one of the walks. Cupid, it is said, flies low over Castlebar and the walks have sparked numerous marriages, strong friendships, all in keeping with the slogan of the International Marching League: *Nos Lungat Ambulare* (May Walking Bring Us Together).

A contingent from the Dutch *army and air force led the opening* parade, marching through the damp streets of Castlebar behind the town band playing the *Stars and Stripes*. The stream of walkers carried the flags of a dozen or more nations. The town was decked out with bunting and shop-window displays welcomed the walkers. The Chamber of Trade was convinced that Castlebar had been put on the international map by its walks. One group arrived by coach from Czechoslovakia after four days on the road. Marchers from Japan, conspicuous in their white gloves, included Yoshiko Chikuma, a widow in her eighties and a Castlebar regular. Despite two hip replacements, she clocked up 80 kilometres over the four days.

Policemen and professional soldiers on holiday from England have over the years been counted among *the walkers. "The whole essence of* this gathering is good companionship," one of the organisers says. "We have no time for tribal attitudes. It's ironic that the marches here and in Drumcree should take place on the same day, for such very different reasons and with such opposite results."

The walks began not for altruistic reasons but simply to lift the town's image and tourist industry. Mr Sweeney recalled the first Castlebar march in 1966, when a handful of folk tramped through the town to the amazement and sniggers of the public at large. "Many locals were farmers who covered huge distances on foot in their working day. They could not see the point," he says.

Numbers built up over the years. Castlebar entered the calendar of the International Marching League and contracts were made with Nijmegen in the Netherlands, *whose annual walk attracts* an entry of 43,000.

"Events like those are supermarket marches; we prefer to think of ourselves as the corner shop. It would be hard for Castlebar to absorb such numbers," says Mr Sweeney a year-round walker who has mastered the technique of avoiding blisters by covering his toes with Vaseline, dousing his socks with baby powder and encasing his feet in a large pair of wellington boots.

The walks were slickly organised with a daily choice of 20km or 40km road marches or a 30km *ramble* along Castlebar's *maze* of fuchsia-lined country lanes leading up into the mountains, from which the view across the fractured coastline of County Mayo is stunning.

The pattern is for the rambleleader to set the pace and for everyone to follow with occasional stops for cold drinks, lunch and for stragglers to catch up. Walk cards are punched by officials at intervals along the way and the correct number of punch marks will win the walker a medal. Some strode silently along, hypnotised by the metronomic thud of the boots in front. Others chatted with whoever happened to be walking alongside them. A Belgian was explaining the current problems with the Walloon community; behind him a woman described the best way to make a syrup pudding; and further down the line a walker cursed the pair of boots he was wearing for the first time.

The walkers were a cheerful, gregarious crowd with as strong a sense of community and purpose as the marchers of Drumcree, but celebrating only their delight in one of the simplest, least expensive and most enjoyable pastimes.

As Drumcree and Northern Ireland began clearing up an aftermath of broken glass, burned-out vehicles and battered hopes, Castlebar marchers prepared for the grand finale — the Blister Ball, to which most strode and just a few limped. Elaine Devereux, the head of ceremonies, was happy with the way things had gone this year.

She asked: "Could you please let them know there is some good news from over here?"

A VET WRITES

Q **We adopted a 14-month-old cat from a rescue home eight weeks ago. The problem is that he claws at the wallpaper causing a lot of damage. We have given him a scratching post and several toys, but it hasn't helped. We tell him "no" but this doesn't have any effect either. Can you suggest anything please?**

A Rescue cats (and dogs) arrive complete with all their virtues and vices. Your cat could have been taken to the rescue home because he clawed the wallpaper in his *previous home. Reformation* is possible, but if he has been a sinner for a long time, re-education will take a while. Saying "no" is not likely to help. A water pistol is more effective. Repeated and unexpected showers whenever he claws the walls will get the message across. Cats don't like to walk on cooking foil so put strips of this on the floor beneath his scratching points. Orange peel on top of the foil is an olfactory "off-putter" which will also keep him away from the wallpaper. That's the negative approach. The scratching post is a positive factor and you can make this more attractive by scenting it with cat-nip. Feed your cat close to the post to persuade him that "his post" smells nice and is a food source.

JAMES ALLCOCK

● *Write to The Times Vet. Weekend*. The Times. *1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. Advice is offered without legal responsibility.*

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Make moving a pet project

Tim Cotton explains how to reduce the stress on your pets when you move house

ADVERTISING ARCHIVES

Dogs should be kept on a lead until they are familiar with their new home

Butter the cat's paws, microchip the dog and keep the goldfish in a scampi container. Not advice from an outlandish, barbaric cookbook, but tips given by vets all over the country to people with pets *who are moving house.*

"Unlike human beings, you cannot tell your pets you are moving," says Ron Kirkby, chairman of the Kingston-upon-Thames branch of the RSPCA. "People don't realise that moving house is just as stressful for their animals.

"There are many tips, but the best advice is always give pets special attention. Pamper them, make a fuss of them — and keep them safe."

Dogs are pack animals who stay with whoever they feel comfortable with. As long as they are well looked after when their owners move, they will readily accept and adapt to their new environment.

Cats, on the other hand, are territorial creatures. They regard a place as their home or patch and, when their owners move, they often struggle to adapt to their new territory. If they find they cannot stamp their authority on their new home, they yearn for the territory they once ruled. They should, therefore, be kept in a small room containing familiar objects for between five days and four weeks, and slowly be allowed to explore the rest of the house. When they are let outside for the first time, make sure they are hungry, then you can rattle *their* feeding bowls and they will come back promptly.

Most vets recommend smearing a cat's paws with butter as it is let out. It will lick its paws (all cats like the taste of butter) and this will tell it that the new house is a suitable place to adopt as its new territory.

Other family pets present fewer headaches, but you must take care when transporting goldfish. You need to put them inside a scampi container, sold in frozen-food shops, as they are made of polystyrene which allows oxygen to permeate, so preventing the fish suffocating. But all animals suffer some degree of stress when moving home — how much varies according to the individual temperament.

"For dogs it's more of an adventure — they have a new path or garden to sniff. But cats usually try to escape. Even when you keep them in, they try to hide," says animal behaviourist Dr Roger Mugford.

Among the places a cat may hide in a new home is the washing-machine, as a client of Harrogate vet Avril Johnson discovered. The elder daughter of a family which had just moved into a new house threw her clothes into the washing-machine and turned it on. Ten minutes later her mother returned and found the cat whizzing around the machine. He luckily survived the ordeal.

But not all pets and owners are as fortunate. Suzanne Thomas, a vet from York, relates the death of a labrador on the day his owner moved home. "The owner settled the dog in a small room, but one of the removal men inadvertently opened the door and he rushed out into the road. He was hit by a lorry and killed."

"Many of the dead cats and dogs we find have run away after moving house," Mr Kirkby says. "If for no other reason than this, we advise everyone to have their pets microchipped." This is a way of name-tagging. A microchip containing the owner's name and address is fixed beneath the pet's skin, making it easy for a vet or RSPCA officer to identify runaways. It also resolves disputes over ownership, particularly when cats — and occasionally dogs — return to their former homes.

"It is amazing how often cats go back to their old house," says Folkestone vet Tony Barnes. He recalls a local cat which kept returning to her old home. Eventually the new homebuyers assumed ownership. During the cat's lifetime, the house was sold three times and the cat became part of the asking price.

PET MOVES

- **Check whether the house is suitable for pets. Also are you allowed to keep them? In many cases, local authorities do not allow pets in council property.**
- **Is the house overrun with fleas? John Byrne, an Oxfordshire vet, says he sees many flea-ridden pets of people who have recently moved home. Often the previous owners' pets have had fleas and, if the property has been empty for a while, it provides a good undisturbed breeding ground for them.**
- **Consult your vet about the stress your pet is likely to suffer. Vets often prescribe tranquillisers to highly-strung pets but make sure they are given time to get over the drugs in a *quiet, safe place.***
- **Pets should always travel in safety and comfort. Birds, gerbils, guinea-pigs and rabbits should go in cages or hutches and cats in baskets. If possible, ask a friend to look after your dog or cat during the move.**
- **Dogs should be kept in the house or garden until the new home is in order. Then they should be taken out, but always on a lead, to familiarise themselves with their new surroundings.**

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'After the election, I even detected a faint whiff of machismo among some of the men about not how little but how *much* they cried'

Welcome to the nation of blubbers

LIFE AND SOUL

GINNY DOUGARY

OUR YOUNGER son has a joke — his first and only joke, in fact, and as such he likes to tell it every day, several times a day, if at all possible. I, too, thought it was hilarious the first time because, with his parody of unctuous concern and faintly lascivious eye-rolling, he bore an uncanny and mercifully fleeting resemblance to Bob Monkhouse.

"Knock knock, *Mumeeeee*," he says, in that peculiarly commanding way six-year-olds have. "Who's there, darling?" "Boo," his lips already curling with anticipation. "Boo who?" "Don't cry, it's only a joke." At which both sons clutch their sides and crease up with laughter.

They are still at the age where it is just about acceptable for boys to boo-hoo in the playground without being ostracised by their peer group. The older one, who is currently obsessed with defining what is and isn't "cool", knows that blubbing is in the second category, but since his school is not one of those establishments where a boy who cries is harangued by others for being "a weed, a wet and a girlie", tears are not yet something which have to be suppressed at all costs.

I wonder whether we may be turning into a nation of blubbers. I was out of the country for the election, but came back to find that the most pressing question in even the most hard-nosed left-leaning circles was "So at what point in the evening did *you* cry?" There were the sentimentalists who became moist-eyed when Tony Blair, with a catch in his voice, talked about his mother not being alive to share his happiness, and the Tory-haters' tears of joy when Portillo lost his seat. No one seemed to find it in the least bit embarrassing or inappropriate that his or her response to the end of 18 years of Conservative rule was to weep. Indeed, I even detected a faint whiff of machismo among some of the men about not how little but how *much* they cried. Only the children found the idea of grown-ups boo-hooing — particularly about something as boring as politics — absurd. "Dad, are you really saying that Tony Blair made you cry?" was the nine-year-old's response, followed by his favourite exasperating insult, "*Shame!*"

I must say that I still find it disconcerting myself when grown-ups cry. The sight of old men weeping is peculiarly affecting. At the memorial service I attended recently, I was surrounded by crusty old fellows, sticks by their side, tears coursing down their furrowed cheeks, and it made me feel quite overcome knowing that decades of conditioning were being overturned in that public expression of their sorrow.

I can still hear the terrible sound of my father crying. It was so profoundly shocking — in that small moment turning my whole child's world topsy-turvy — that I can, without any difficulty other than a sense, still, of confusion and inarticulate fear, see myself then, hearing a howl like the cry of an animal in pain, rise from my bed, clutching my raggedy teddy, walk down the dimly lit corridor to my parents' bedroom and whisper, "What's the matter?"

Since the birth of our children, my husband has become a serial blubber. Their arrival has unlocked all the emotion that was sealed up with a padlock when he was eight or so — younger, at least, than our older son is now — and it became apparent that boys don't cry. He cried, of course, when they were born, and during their first nativity plays, and whenever the older one performs something beautiful on the piano, and he is bound to blow his nose loudly when he sees the younger one in his wellies and sou'wester Singin' in the Rain with all the other Year 1 Gene Kellys in his class assembly next week.

When our nine-year-old son was still a breastfeeding baby, my husband read Alexander Stuart's account of his young son's death from leukaemia and could not stop crying. Since then, he has refused to read anything which involves children and pain. The act of having children has turned him into an Everydad: every child who suffers is his child; every father who loses a son is him. The other day, while invigilating an undergraduate exam, he happened to read an article about children leaving home as young adults. One father had given up watching football on television because it made him miss his son so much. In front of 35 students, my husband was horrified to discover that his cheeks were wet.

My tears are cheap. I have even cried watching an episode of *Charlie's Angels*. My whole life is an exercise in catharsis. Last weekend, I wept buckets watching Ian Holm's brave, naked Lear, and then I wept some more in *The Railway Children* — especially the bit at the end when Jenny Agutter in those great black stockings and frothy white petticoats runs down the station wailing "It's — [gulp] my Daddy!" When I asked the six-year-old if he was okay, he said: "I'm not crying, I've just got water in my eyes."

Why changing a plug proved I could cope

Taking on tasks done by a partner can help the bereaved to deal with the future. **Diana Appleyard** reports

My father died five years ago, and his death left my mother bereft. Not only had he been her loving partner and best friend, he'd also been the one who looked after the bank accounts, paid the bills and made sure everything was insured. Theirs was very much the traditional "husband and wife" partnership, where she looked after the home and the children, and he earned the money and looked after all the financial aspects of their lives.

They had very clearly divided roles, and when he died very suddenly from a stroke, it was as if the rug had been pulled from under her feet. Not only did she have to cope with the grief of his death, but also the realisation that everything he'd taken such good care of was now her responsibility — and she had no idea how the system worked.

In the early days of their marriage he even filled her car with petrol for her. I remember once she was furious because she'd set out for the luncheon club, all dressed up, and was absolutely livid to find she'd been left without petrol. She couldn't simply go and get some — because she had no money. My dad looked after all that.

After his death we all helped as much as we could, and she relied very heavily on the partners at my father's accountancy firm. But after a while this reliance on others began to annoy us. We'd say: "Sort it out yourself, Mum. Insuring a house isn't that difficult, honestly."

Little things would be blown out of proportion — the loss of a share certificate would become a gigantic problem, ensuring phone calls backwards and forwards to increasingly exasperated members of the family. It has taken her a long time to come to terms with the fact that everything — all the money, all the insurance, all the pensions, getting the car serviced, paying the bills — is her responsibility, and she can cope.

"In a marriage or relationship we do all have set tasks and responsibilities," says Christabel Hilliard, the welfare adviser for Cruse, the bereavement counselling organisation. "With older people, there is often a divide between the home and what are seen as the 'manly' responsibilities — earning the money, paying the bills. Now I think those roles are much more blurred with more sharing of responsibilities, and often it's the woman who'll handle the money.

"But in almost every relationship each partner does have set tasks," she says. "The woman will know how the washing-machine works — the man will know how to work the mower. Often it is still the man who'll do all the practical things around the house — changing plugs, basic DIY. When one partner dies, taking on these responsibilities can seem incredibly daunting, often impossible. What we suggest is rely on someone else initially to help you — your solicitor, your accountant, friends and family — but then it is important you start to take charge. It is after all going to become part of your new life."

Joyce Hyams's husband John died suddenly two years ago from a heart attack. At the time they were living in Spain, running a business together. "He died sitting at home eating a meal. It was a terrible shock, and it took me quite a while to even accept what had happened," she says.

"We did everything together — shopping, working, cooking, seeing friends. He was a very practical person, and there were lots of things he wouldn't let me do. I did pay cheques into the bank account, but he looked after all the insurance — everything. I never even had to think about writing a letter. He did all that. If a plug went — he changed it. He wouldn't have dreamt of letting me do it."

After he died Joyce returned to England, where her two daughters, Maureen and Gill, live. "When I got back I relied very heavily on them, and they did everything for me. My former son-in-law sorted out all my paperwork, and in a way I was letting them run my life, like John had done."

But after a while her family rebelled. Joyce says: "I had been leaving everything to Gill, and I could sense she was stepping back. It took me a while to realise why."

Gill says: "I could see that she wasn't going to learn to cope on her own if I said, 'OK, Mum, I'll sort it out'. So we all employed a bit of tough love. We said, 'No, Mum, you do it. You're perfectly capable of paying your insurance or whatever.' I saw that things which in real life — such as losing a credit card — would be a bit of a problem, were becoming the end of the world for her. So we had to step back to make her cope."

'I sanded all the skirting boards; they look awful, but at least I did it'

Ms Hilliard says: "This is very common. When someone dies suddenly, you are completely fazed. Even people who were formerly real 'copers' go to pieces. What you have to realise is that this is a reaction to what's happened. People are very shocked and frightened, and what they do is transfer all the anxieties and fears about the bereavement onto their small problems, and create a drama. It's also a good way of getting attention if you're feeling lonely.

"What you have to do is separate the feelings. Recognise you're het up because you're bereaved — not because of this problem. Then deal with it as calmly as you can."

Alison Parks's husband Steven died recently at the age of 35, leaving her with two children under four. Not only did she have his death to contend with, but her mortgage company also refused to pay off the debt because he had suffered from depression, which they claimed hadn't been referred to on his life assurance policy.

"It has been a horrendous time," she says. "Money is the biggest worry, and also looking after the children. I can't get a job because I need to care for them. If it wasn't for my Mum and Dad I don't know what I'd do."

She has relied on them heavily since Steven's death. But that has had its price. "My mother is driving me mad," Alison says. "They feel they really have to look after me, but I feel they're treating me as a child. My mother thinks I don't know how to do things, and she sends my father over to do them for me."

Alison is also missing Steven in lots of little ways. "The video broke recently, and I was left sitting in the middle of the living room floor surrounded by all these wires. Steven knew how it worked. Then the garage roof leaked, and everything got soaking wet. That night I sat and cried, because I had no idea who to phone to fix it. Also there's no one to tell when things go wrong — I just can't pick up the phone and say, 'Steven, help!' So I panic."

But gradually she feels she is becoming more in control. "I sanded all the skirting boards in the living room, and to be honest they look awful, but at least I did it."

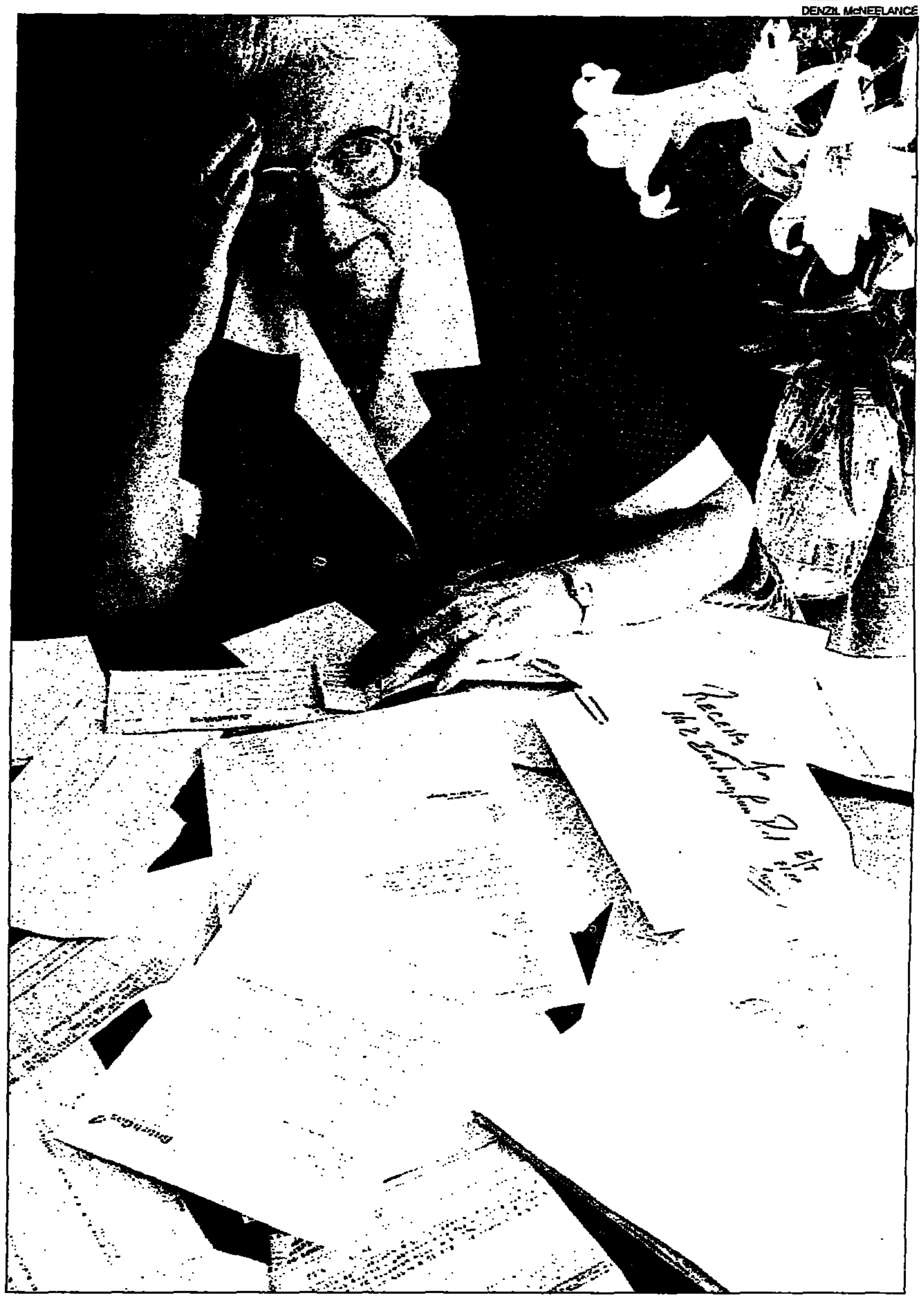
Joyce too feels she's beginning to take on the jobs that before fell to John. "The first time I changed a plug I switched it on with a broom handle because I was convinced I was going to blow myself up. But now I'm putting up shelves and doing a bit of varnishing, and I feel really proud of myself."

Ms Hilliard says: "Once you do start taking over your former partner's responsibilities there is a real sense of achievement, and it all helps to build up your confidence. You can think, 'My husband would be so proud of me'. Even doing little things like mowing the lawn or changing a plug means you're incorporating what they did as part of your current life, and it can make you feel very close to them.

"Many people become more confident than they were before the death of their partner. Lots of people say to me, 'I'm doing things I never thought I'd do'. The death of someone very close means many changes, but some people emerge stronger and more confident than before."

My mother now has a very full, interesting life. She's taken up activities my father would have had no time for, but which she enjoys. She's mastered the art of insurance, and getting the car serviced. I'm just waiting for her to take up hang-gliding.

DENZIL McNEELANCE



Joyce Hyams found that learning how to sort out her paperwork helped her to cope following her husband's death

Ruth Gledhill enjoys the peace of a near-empty church that drew 18th-century Bloomsbury's great and good

An oasis of quiet in the city centre

SELFISHLY speaking, there can be few things more enjoyable than Prayer Book evensong in a near-empty church. Maybe it was growing up in the countryside, with no one but our family, the organist's daughters and the farmer's wife in the congregation — and dusty prayer black books that urged us still to pray for King George — that did the damage, but worship at St George's in Bloomsbury felt strangely like coming home.

One difference was the noise. Central London was eerily quiet on a Sunday, while hymns in the countryside seemed always to be accompanied by the unstoppable sounds of dogs, cows and sheep on neighbouring farms. But strangely, in this parish of thousands, there were even fewer people at church than there used to be in our home church, which served a parish of about 35.

As in all empty churches, the three worshippers gravitated towards the back. The organist played exquisitely in the gallery of this blissful church, while the church warden sat alone, near the front. A couple of tourists wandered in, and stayed, halfway through.

Thus it was that the two elderly ladies behind me and I had the undivided attention of the priest, Fr Perry Butler, who is also director of ordinands in the Edmonton area, and religious adviser to London Weekend Television. "The theme that links the readings on this second Sunday in Pentecost is a more excellent way to love," he said.

The second-best bit was the hymns. For someone with a loud but sadly out-of-tune voice, this was the perfect place to let go. The ladies at behind suffered uncomplainingly through the *Magnificat*, the *Nunc Dimittis* and *Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy*.

But the best bit of all was the priest who, instead of preaching, read George Herbert's poem, *Love*. "You must love the alien for you once lived as alien in Egypt," we heard in the first reading, from *Deuteronomy*. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your mind and all your strength," we heard in the second, from *Mark*. "Let the greatness of your love be known to us that we may worship with the wonder of joy," we prayed.

Before the service, there had been a recital, with Lucy Wilmot on the violin and Lydia Clatworthy on the piano performing works by Schubert, Poulenc and Elgar. For this, the church was nearly full. This was the first of 12 Sunday afternoon recitals at St George's, and was a perfect prelude to evensong. But these people did not stay.

In the morning the church has between 30 and 40 worshippers, when coffee and tea after the service is plentiful, and evensong has been known to go into double figures.

Once, the pews told a different story. In the 18th century, this church served the great and the good. In 1730, its vestrymen included the Duke of Montagu; Sir Robert Eyre, Lord Chief Justice; Sir Hans Sloane, the celebrated naturalist; William Hucks, the royal brewer and five baronets.

Its architecture reflects this. From the statue of King George I atop the unique steeple, based on the design of the mausoleum built in Turkey for King Mausolus himself, to the grand 18th-century south portico and the gilded winged cherubs in the east apse, the church is at once solemn and light.

Many alterations have been made. One of the saddest losses, besides that of the congregation, has been of the lions and unicorns that decorated the base of the steeple, removed a century ago. Efforts to trace them this century have failed.

Fr Perry arrived at St George's in November 1995 and, although part-time, is determined to bring it back to life. Services there are renowned for intelligent preaching and a broadly catholic approach within the Anglican tradition.

As I left, I prayed that church bureaucrats concerned with bottoms on pews would not seek out this place and close it down. St George's is living proof that there is a need and purpose for the near-empty church. None can say that God is not there just because there are so few people.

● *St George's Church, Bloomsbury Way, London WC1 (0171-405 3044).*

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Lucy Wilmot, violin, and Lydia Clatworthy, piano, at St George's

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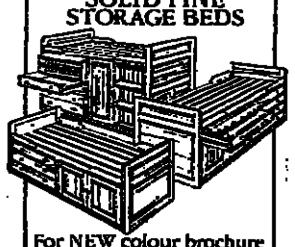

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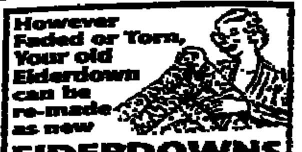

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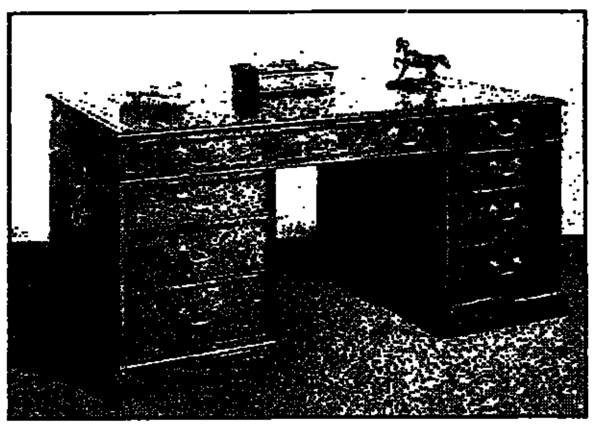

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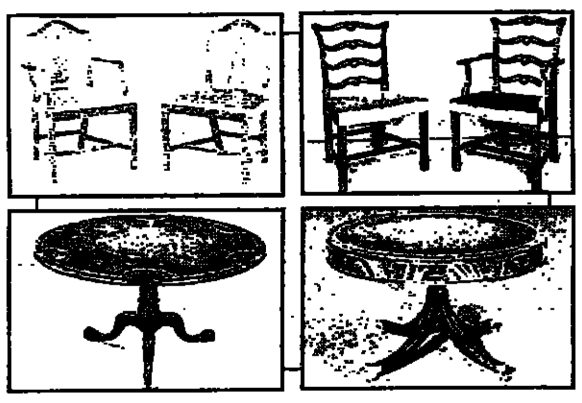

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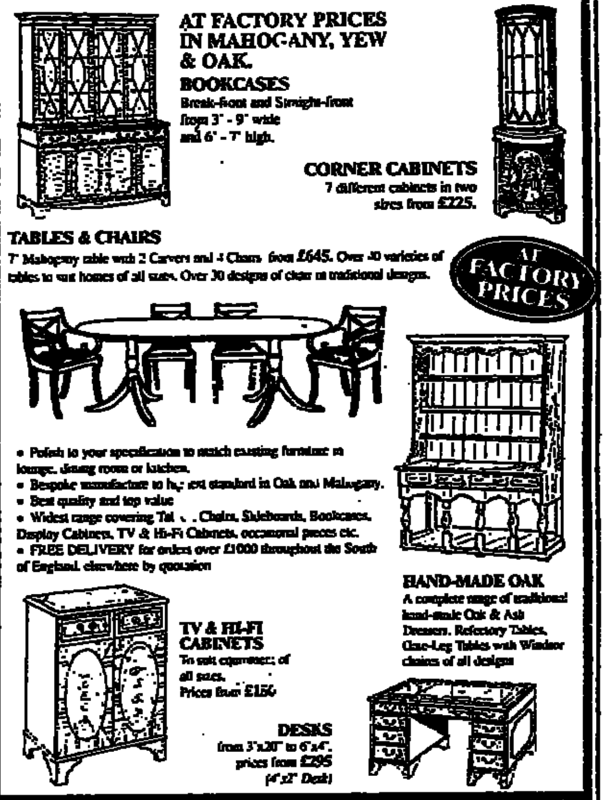

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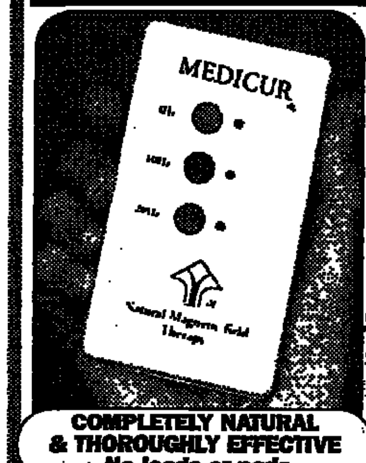

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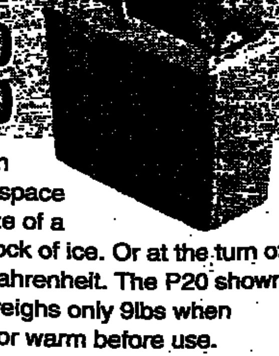

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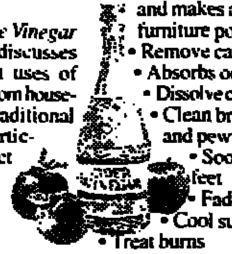

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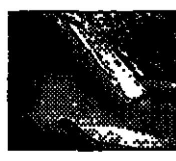

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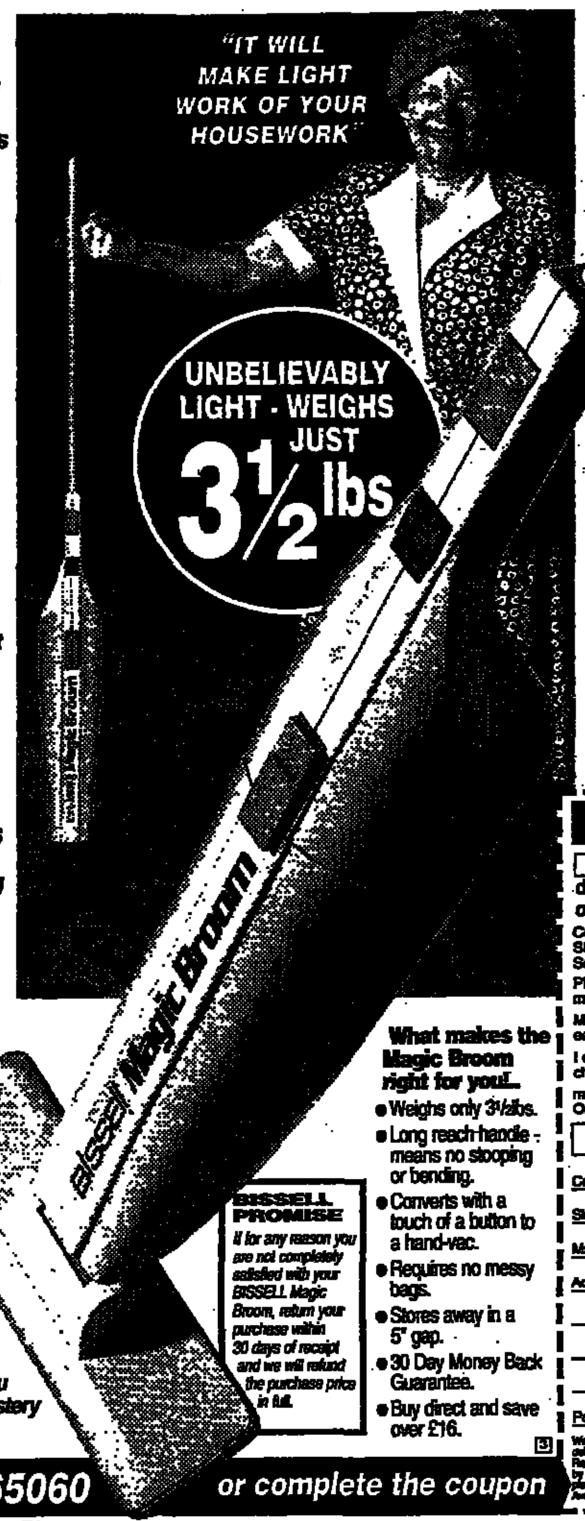

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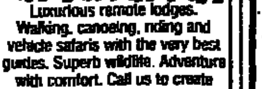

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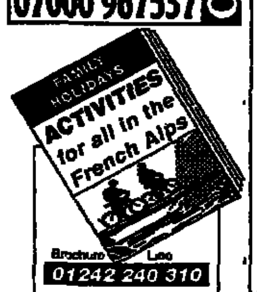

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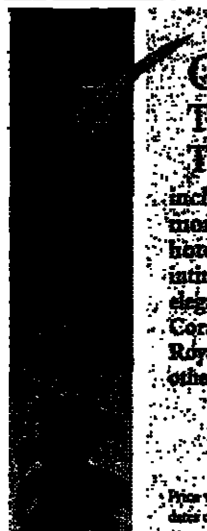

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Moorish memories of a glorious past

After a gap of 19 years, **Jeremy Wayne** returned to Morocco to find the atmosphere of medieval mystery still unchanged

PICTURES

To jaded western tourists, little seems to have changed over the centuries in Marrakesh; but it is a city where much is hidden from the casual visitor and where lives are intensely private

Back in 1978, when Blondie topped the album charts with *Parallel Lines* and students grew pot in yoghurt cartons on their window-sills, I first took the road to Morocco. With two college friends I crossed the straits from Algeciras in southern Spain late one August afternoon. At dusk the *Transmediterranea* ferry slipped effortlessly into Tangier harbour and we stepped gingerly on to the Dark Continent, our progress marginally impeded by the cartons of Marlboros and half-dozen pairs of Levis we had been advised to carry in case we got into a scrape.

I had brought a guidebook along, too, written by a lady whose name, appropriately, was Jane Holliday, who described the old fishing port as "a gay symphony of colour", a description uncannily apt as we found ourselves accosted a dozen or more times by wanton boys before reaching the harbour gates.

Nineteen years later I returned, without room-mates or rucksacks or American cigarettes, an American wife instead, with a suite of suitcases in her wake and a fondness for good hotels. Would Morocco be the same? We would follow the same route, visit the same sites and, since this is a true story, only the hotels would be changed to protect the spoilt.

We sailed from Algeciras again. From the upper deck of the *Ibn Battuta* only a heart of stone would fail to be moved by the first glimpse of Tangier, Africa's northern outpost, a patchwork of crumbling plaster which tumbles from hilltops down the slopes into Jane Holliday's gay harbour below.

Between 1912 and 1956 Tangier was an international city, and until well into the 1970s poets, pederasts, aristocrats and the dispossessed came here to find each other and, occasionally, themselves. In its heyday it was the most licentious city on the planet, teeming with boy brothels, pornographic cinemas and drug dens. Paul Bowles, William Burroughs, Allen Ginsberg, Joe Orton — all gravitated here for their art and their pleasure, and Bowles remains here, a twinkly-eyed octogenarian living in unseemly squalor in a faceless apartment building opposite the defunct American consulate.

Eschewing the Pension Marrakech in the medina where I had holed up last time around (great location, Art Deco reception desk, clean-ish sheets and cold running water, a bargain in anyone's book with doubles at £3.50 a night), we used El Minzah as our base instead. A turn-of-the-century Moorish pile built by Greek tycoon Ion Perdicaris as his townhouse, it later became the Palmarium casino before being converted into a hotel by the Earl of Bute in the 1930s. El Minzah, like Tangier itself, is pure theatre, with its fountained Andalusian courtyard and fezzed flunkies waiting on your every whim; it also boasts the city's safest car park, should you happen to be motorised.

We spent the mornings enjoying Tangier's warming winter sun and the afternoons wandering the alleys of the old town looking for what once had been.

Barbara Hutton's house, Sidi Hosni, now divided ignobly into four apartments, dominates the casbah. Her excesses are well documented in the city over which she reigned as uncrowned queen, her influence so great that in 1958 the mayor of Tangier ordered that all existing arches in the city be widened so that her Rolls-Royces might glide more easily through them.

Tangier is now the most unfashionable resort in Morocco, which makes it a serious traveller's dream. Since the 1970s, most of its infamous watering-holes, such as the flamenco *estaminet* La Mar Chica and the populist Paradise, have closed down, but some of the haunts frequented by Hutton, beau monde king David Herbert and later the Beats, still survive.

We drank beer at noon in Dean's Bar, a filthy hole-in-the-wall where the beau monde once went slumming and where nowadays Spanish dock workers crowd the bar, expectant and expectorating, to watch football on satellite television.

In the cafés on the Place de France, the central point of the city, where rich man, poor man, beggar man and thief congregate, we sipped mint tea *sans sucre* and watched the shadows lengthen. Much later, in the hours after midnight, we knocked back injudicious shots of cheap brandy at the Tangier Inn, a deliciously unwholesome, louche dive sporting Ginsberg's annotated photographs on the walls and adjoining which, in a ground floor room of the Hotel Mourira, Burroughs wrote *The Naked Lunch*.

It was time to head south, and seven hours' drive via Ouezzane, along roads of miserable repair, brought us parched and frazzled to Fez, Morocco's spiritual heart. Barnaby Rogerson, in his excellent *Cadogan Guide to Morocco*, calls Fez "the most complete, Islamic, medieval city in the world". Founded in the 9th century, the *medersas*, or universities, of Fez were flourishing when the city of Oxford was an inhospitable swamp.

I phoned to book a table to dine at the Palais Mnebhi, a 14th-century palace in the medina where Sultan Moulay Halid signed the Treaty of Fez with General Lyautey of France in 1912, thereby establishing the French Protectorate, and where last year, on a private visit, the Prince of Wales ate *pigeon b'stilia* reclining Moroccan-style on a damask divan. These days, as a restaurant, the Mnebhi serves the best couscous in town, but the palace is difficult to find and its owner, Haj Abdeslam Sentissi, kindly said he would send someone to our hotel to escort us.

That is how we met Bousghiri Azzedine, a multilingual (nine languages, including Aramaic), Shakespearean scholar with an MA in philosophy from the University of Fez, who has written extensively on the Bard in Arabic and is the author, in English, of a widely acclaimed paper on *Love's Labour's Lost*. Born in Fez, the politics and precarious economics of his native Morocco oblige Azzedine to work as a tourist guide.

At Bab Boujeloud, a main gate of access to the old town, I remembered every café and the fatuous anecdotes each brought to mind. Fads and fashion simply do not enter the Moorish consciousness — jeans and satellite dishes excepted — and so things have at least the appearance of remaining the same. Certainly the Hotel Cascade seemed so. Rooms are still basic here and the spurty-style plumbing, as if the taps are going to be sick, seems not to have advanced down the years. But the Cascade does have the advantage of a good position, tucked just inside the Boujeloud gate.

At Bab Guissa, by the medina's northernmost point, we stayed at the Palais Jamai, a former vizier's palace which was once the "best" address in the city. Better days it has almost certainly seen, but the view of the medina from the Jamai's rooms and terraces will take your breath away: every traveller should pass this way at least once in a lifetime.

At dusk the old city is bathed in a pale pink light, swallows swoop across the rooftops and muezzins climb high in their *koutubias* to intone their plaintive call to prayer. Then darkness falls like a velvet shroud and all night long you hear the acrid twang of bells, and crowing cocks, and dogs, and distant drums pounding ancient, secret messages.

Like a layered fruit cake, like an oily, rich cassoulet, each town, each city of Morocco titillates, seduces, then defies you to leave.

There is never enough time here; at the moment you begin to assimilate the smell and the colour, when your ear grows accustomed to the rhythms of the alleyways and your gait has adapted to respect the donkey's right of way — unless you are very lucky, that is the moment when you have to move on.

And so we came to Marrakesh. The lanterns were being lit in Djemma el Fna, the Square of the Dead, and the braziers stoked, and the boy dancers from the deep south were starting to shake back and forth like holy men on acid, as we sipped tea on a tourist terrace overlooking the sprawling, pulsating parade ground.

"Are you with the German group?" a short, fat man with an umbrella had asked my father, years before, on this terrace. "No, I'm with the Woolwich," he had replied, always quick on the draw.

You cannot mind tour groups in Marrakesh; you cannot deny other human beings a glimpse of this earthy beauty, this exquisite, bone-dry ante-Atlas air, this lifting up of eyes to the snow-covered mountains beyond.

Yet Marrakesh is essentially a private place, a place of mystery, deep, difficult, unfathomable, with its hugger-mugger gardens like St Laurent's magical Majorelle, the pavilions and orchards of the Agdal, and the deceptively simple symmetry of the Menara.

Poverty, I know, is a relative term. In the summer of 1978 we considered ourselves poor, and the three of us stayed for a fortnight in the CTM "hotel", a furnace on the square without basic plumbing, without basic anything. One bed and two wooden palettes, so that every third night, revolving as we did, I got lucky and slept like a sultan, between sheets. But to live as we did, even for two short weeks, around the clock, right there on the Djemma el Fna — that was everything, and when I brought that summer to mind, I understood that I, not the city, had changed.

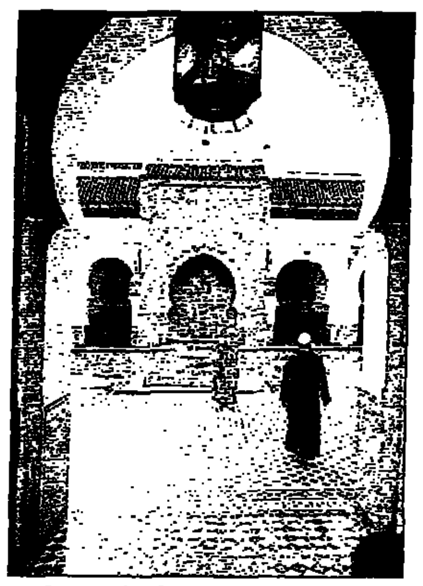
It is true the Marrakesh "experience" is sanitised, considered from the compound of the famous Mamounia Hotel. But those who feel such overt opulence is misplaced in a city of obvious poverty are perhaps missing the point. Marrakesh is not a poor place. From the sumptuous palaces of the medina, to the ancient mud streets of the mellah, or Jewish quarter, this is a city hung with satins and brocades, painted in colours of rose and indigo and gold; where evenings are heavy with the scent of jasmine and orange blossom and a million stars shine in a cold, black sky.

Marrakeshis are not poor; like most Moroccans, they are simply broke. And as for the giving of alms, an issue which confronts you constantly in this glorious land, embarrassing awkward Britons, you can do no better than follow the counsel of the Prophet. For Muhammad, when asked, "What shall we give to the poor?", answered: "Give what you can spare . . . and if you can spare nothing, then at least speak to them kindly."

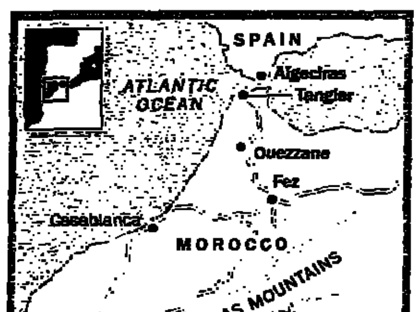
Stay at the Mamounia if you can afford it and, if you cannot, speak kindly about it, even if you do not wholly approve. "With the rich and the mighty, always a little patience," as Scott Fitzgerald wrote in one of his more sober moments.

La Mamounia, while not to everyone's taste, is a hotel of legends. It is vast and very beautiful, with indoor fountains, pools of roses, exotic gardens, a swimming pool which is the height of restrained luxury and a doorman so tall, so dashing in his jewelled turban and Berber cloak, that respectable women — and, for all I know, respectable men also — hardly know which way to turn.

In Marrakesh, too, the hour-glass soon empties. Three bell-boys loaded our suitcases, for here they do nothing by halves, and Ahmed, the turbanned doorman, flashed us a smile that was pure Hollywood. We eased the car past the guides at the hotel entrance and turned left on to the Avenue Bab Jdid in the direction of Casablanca, and home. We promised ourselves we would come back soon no matter where we might stay — palace, pension or palette. In Morocco, the difference is but a state of mind.



Mosque in the ancient city of Fez



MOROCCO FACT FILE

- The author travelled with British Airways (0345 222111) and Abercrombie & Kent (0171-730 9600).
- Abercrombie & Kent organises tailor-made holidays to Morocco. An itinerary similar to the one described here costs from £1,090 for 11 nights.
- British Airways flies weekly to Tangier from Heathrow and Agadir from Gatwick; twice weekly to Marrakesh from Gatwick and daily to Casablanca from Heathrow. World Offers to Tangier start at £229.
- The rule used to be: winter in the south, summer in the north, although with swimming pools and air-conditioning this is changing. Marrakesh temperatures exceed 100F in July and August; in Tangier expect rain some of the time between November and April. Winter temperatures rarely fall below 55F.
- Carry small change for tipping, and tip "a little and often". The average wage in Morocco is less than five dirhams an hour (30p). Tip too much and you will be seen as a fool who does not know the value of money.
- Reading: The Travel Bookshop (0171-229 5260) recommends: *Cadogan Guide, Morocco* (£14.99); *A Year in Marrakesh*, by Peter Mayne (Eland, £8.99); *Fez: City of Islam*, by Titus Burckhardt (Islamic Texts Society, £14.95); *Morocco That Was*, by Peter Harris (Eland, £8.99); *Tangier, City of the Dream*, by Iain Finlayson (Flamingo, £7.99).

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Australia: From ancient rainforest and the wonders of the Great Barrier Reef to the duck-billed platypus . . .

WORLD PICTURES

Snorkellers enjoy a marine spectacle off Port Douglas

STILL PICTURES

Mangroves, Daintree River: Rainforests and swamps that once made tropical Australia one of the world's most inhospitable regions now draw tourists in their thousands

Ramble in the jungle

The train climbs slowly through the steamy, lush undergrowth, its vintage carriages snaking through cuttings, over waterfalls and around precipitous gorges. A century ago the old railway to Kuranda was the only way for tin miners and gold prospectors on the high plateau to *reach the Queensland coast* thousands of feet below. Now the 20-mile line, one of the most expensive and accident-prone ever built, is a spectacular route through the once impenetrable rainforest, a glimpse back to the days when swamps, jungles, disease and poisonous snakes and insects made Australia's tropical cone one of the world's most inhospitable regions.

Hauled by a diesel, the 12-carriage train takes 90 minutes to reach the top of the mountain range. In the old days a steam engine could pull only four carriages and took almost six hours to negotiate the curved trellis bridges, 15 tunnels and 98 sharp bends.

At the height of its construction, more than 1,000 men were at work on the mountain, *living on campsite clearings* already overgrown with creepers and dense vegetation. Sometimes it rained for 20 days on end, and mosquitoes, snakes, landslides and cave-ins took their toll.

It still rains torrentially. Northern Queensland receives more precipitation than anywhere else in the country, and rivers course down the slopes into the sea where Captain Cook, his crew sick and despairing, sailed slowly up the coastline looking for safe harbour to put in for repairs after *Endeavour* had been holed by the underwater coral of the Great Barrier Reef. Cook named the mountains and features according to his mood — Mount Sorrow, Cape Tribulation. Now the coastline is Australia's top tourist draw and the rainforest draws thousands *to marvel at the dense* gloom of its vegetation.

The Barrier Reef is a national marine park visited by huge catamaran cruisers that moor above the underwater kingdom to allow divers and snorkellers to view millions of rainbow-coloured fish and corals. The huge crocodiles that bask immobile on the muddy estuary banks are photographed by hundreds of tourists gliding down the rivers in search of Australia's dangerous wildlife.

Cairns is the centre of tourism in the region — a fast-growing town whose centre is now taken over by hotels, restaurants, shops, discos and all the hectic partying of the thousands who arrive, especially from Japan.

From here the giant *aluminium catamarans set* out each morning, gliding across the sea with their powerful stern jets emitting plumes of spray. One company, Quicksilver, has moored its own floating platform above the reef, where instructors teach novices to dive or snorkel and where glass-sided boats meander above the steep banks of coral.

The Great Barrier Reef stretches some 1,500 miles along the coast, encompassing 2,900 individual reefs and 618 continental islands. Protected by Unesco's World Heritage List, it is home to 1,500 species of fish, 242 different types of birds, 22 different whales and 400 species of coral.

No snorkeller can see all that, but even in two hours of exploring you can look at an astonishing range of sparkling, translucent fish, as well as huge marine turtles, stingrays and even the occasional shark, all gliding silently among the corals that branch like antlers or spread out like huge underwater mushrooms. No one is allowed to drop anything overboard, remove any corals or disturb the fish. Both the Federal and Queensland governments have drawn up a protection plan to ensure *that the only disturbances* come from the cyclones that churn up the seas.

The land expeditions into the rainforest also set off from Cairns. Further up the coast is Port Douglas, a beautiful sheltered anchorage that has become an upmarket tourist haven, recently boasting Chancellor Helmut Kohl and President Bill Clinton among its guests.

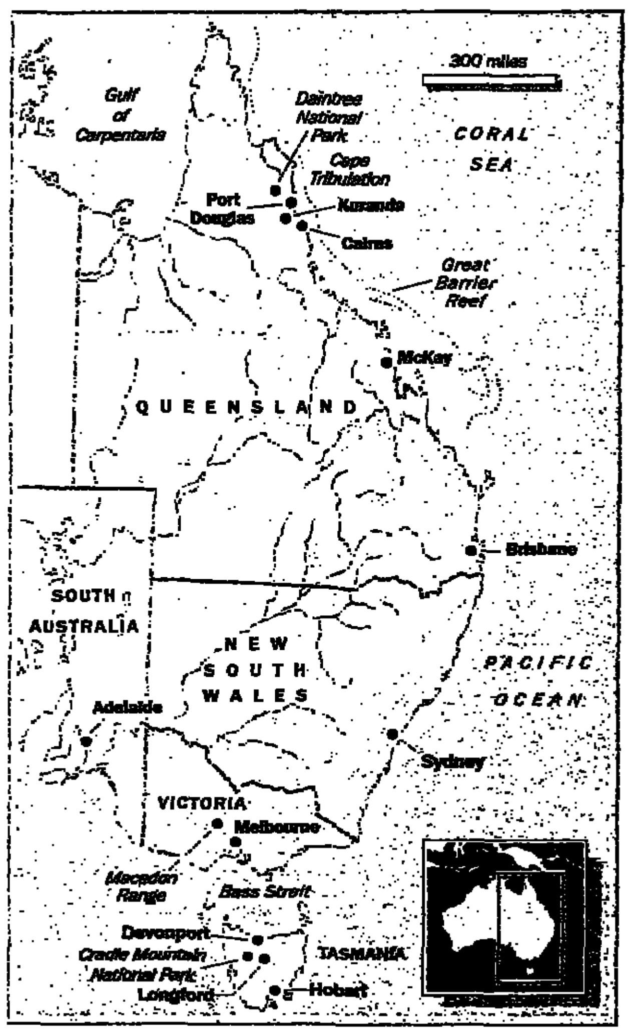
Further inland is the real rainforest — the Daintree National Park, a genetic marvel, a sanctuary for thousands of species isolated from the world when Australia separated from Asia. Boardwalks have been built through the hardwoods and palms, the mangrove swamps and the rattans. Guides point out some *species that date back to* prehistoric times, others with toxic fruits, creepers with razor-sharp climbing hooks and those that shed huge nuts that only the giant birds of the forest can eat.

The rainforest has a dangerous fascination. P&O has established an exclusive resort in the jungle, but those looking out from the elegant shaded balconies have difficulty realising that this is not a film backdrop but a home to snakes, dangerous feral pigs, cane toads that are poisonous and innumerable insects.

A different view of the rainforest is now possible — from above. After years of environmental argument, Skyrail built a five-mile cableway from Kuranda down the mountain to a point near Cairns. Opened in 1995, it is the world's longest gondola cableway, and gives an unprecedented view of the rainforest canopy — the palms, creepers and creatures who have battled to reach the light.

The rainforest was once inhabited by Aborigines. They now live in towns or on Aboriginal land. But they have not lost the skills of jungle culture and survival, and in Kuranda a troupe of Aborigines performs an authentic 30-minute routine depicting animals, hunting and food gathering. The Pamagirri Dancers, their bodies painted in animal decoration, may be only a whisper from an ancient civilisation. *But they well* convey the excitement, the danger and the rituals of a country with a history and wild geography that go back millennia.

MICHAEL BINYON



FACT FILE

- **The author travelled to Cairns with the Australian Tourist Commission (ATC) and British Airways. BA (0345 222111) has return flights to Cairns from £720.**
- **British Airways Holidays (01293 723191) has a 14-night package to include flights, accommodation, transfers, taxes, the Quicksilver cruise and Kuranda from £1,698 per person.**
- **The Quicksilver cruise costs £69 per adult and the Kuranda *Experience £64 (including Sky Rail) from Cairns.***
- **For more information contact the ATC (0990 561434).**
- **Reading: The Travel Bookshop (0171-229 5260) recommends: *The Tree of Man*, by Patrick White (Vintage, £5.99); *The Songlines*, by Bruce Chatwin (Picador, £5.99); *Queensland* (Lonely Planet, £11.95); *Islands of Australia's Great Barrier Reef* (Lonely Planet, £8.95).**

A platypus on the bill

"Over there," shouts a woman wearing a yellow T-shirt and pink shorts and breaking all the rules. We have been told to be *patient, quiet and dressed* discreetly so as not to alarm the platypus which swim and feed in Broken River in the rainforest at Eungella National Park in Queensland.

Fortunately the platypus we have spotted ignores its audience of five and the screeching cacophony of the cockatoos' dusk chorus. It floats centre-stage in the gentle current as though rostered for the evening performance to display its duck-like bill and glossy waterproof fur. Then it swims a strange aquatic waddle using its webbed front feet before diving steeply.

We follow its trail of bubbles as it disappears in the brown water to sift the river bed for lava, grubs and small shrimps. The bubbles stop and we scan the river trying to see where it surfaces.

"There," cries an onlooker at least a minute later, pointing to a small log.

There is indeed a platypus alongside it — but is it the same one?

Then someone spots what is probably our star floating further upstream taking a breath and chewing its prey before diving again.

The second platypus swims closer and disappears into its burrow to our left. In just over an hour there are six sightings of these enchanting egg-laying mammals whose origins are still a mystery. When the first platypus skin arrived in Britain almost 200 years ago, scientists thought it was a hoax.

According to Steve Pearson, *a local naturalist, Eungella is* an excellent place to watch platypus in the wild.

"They inhabit most rivers on the east coast but they are such shy creatures people rarely see them. Here they have become accustomed to being watched but I wouldn't recommend bringing the kids to watch them during the July and August mating season," he says with a grin.

"Honestly, they behave like animals."

JOHN MCLEOD

● *The best viewing times to see the platypus are at dawn or dusk. Eungella National Park is approximately 60 miles North West of Mackay, Queensland (0061 795 84552).*

Duck-billed platypus

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Tassie's call of the wild

AUSTRALIAN TOURIST COMMISSION

Wagnerian undertones: Cradle Mountain, plus the immense glacial lake, forms part of a vast national park about two hours' drive from Hobart

On the afternoon before I sailed, my friends in Melbourne insisted on checking the shipping forecast and dispatching me to a chemist for extra-strength stomach cement.

"Cross the Bass Strait?" the chemist asked as he wrapped up this bottle of 100-proof gut adhesive.

"How did you know that?" I asked.

"One of the roughest seas in the world, the Bass Strait. And, down here, this is the stuff everyone uses to get them through the voyage. Ever been to Tasmania before?" I shook my head.

"Before you get off the ship tomorrow, don't forget to set your clock back 25 years," he advised.

I grabbed my bottle and headed for the Port of Melbourne.

It was not the first time I had heard a lame joke about Tassie: that sparsely populated chunk of land, marooned in permanent geographic exile due south of the Australian mainland. One Sydney friend had noted that it was "very Kiwi" (a common Australian synonym meaning: backward, humourless, smugly provincial), and some of my temperate-minded acquaintances had informed me that Tasmania was, quite simply, paradise.

Certainly, the ship that made the 14-hour crossing from Melbourne, *The Spirit of Tasmania*, was anything but paradise. Rather it seemed to consider itself a sort of Butlin's *Sur-la-Mer* — a floating holiday camp, replete with poker machines, roast dinners, organised fun. The standard sartorial attire among the passengers was the mint-green shell suit, and the ship's décor seemed to hark back to an era when Abba and Bjorn Borg kept us entertained. Maybe I really should have set my watch back 25 years. But, miraculously, the Bass Strait that night was as motionless as plate glass and my bottle of stomach cement sat unopened as we steamed our way south.

We docked in a small port town called Devonport. It was 8.30am on Saturday; the streets were empty; the townscape was Nowheresville Provincial; the air was thick with rustic ennui. And I found myself thinking: "You travel to the bottom of the world, and what's the pay-off? You land in the Irish Midlands".

It took about ten minutes to decide that Devonport and I were going to part company, so I pointed my car in the direction of Longford, because it had to be an improvement on the Longford that is located in the Irish Midlands (and which, if my memory serves me well, is home to one of the largest pet food factories in the Irish Republic).

As it turned out, this Longford was a dazzling surprise. Verdant, roaming fields, neatly parcelled by formal hedges. Old country piles, redolent of Tasmania's colonial beginnings. An airy, gossamer tone to the light lent this stately landscape (best described as Gainsborough Goes Antipodean) a certain mythic, ethereal quality.

As I was to discover during the next few days, Tasmanian light is as moody and volatile as a habitual insomniac. Travelling from Longford across the island's mid-section, I traded Avon and Somerset for a landscape right out of the African veld. Grassy parklands gave way to a terrain of gum trees and hard rocky soil that was the colour of burnt custard. The sun was suddenly merciless, incandescent — a potent hint of the arid bush in an island usually noted for its green and pleasant landscape.

Then this harsh desert sun suddenly transformed itself into a dark, murky Nordic gloom once I was within the urban boundaries of Hobart, the state capital.

This was something of a revelation — a hummocky city of steep hills and venerable wood-framed houses that (both in temperament and visual character) seemed more Scandinavian than Antipodean. Wandering through the back streets of its port, loitering without much intent in its excessively pretty parklands, exploring its vertiginous inner suburbs, I became quickly beguiled by its alluring melancholia — the long shadows and malt whisky tint that bathed the city at dusk; a sense that this was a serious, cultured place where people spent the evening reading books, listening to the baroque top ten (Hobart boasts a first-rate chamber orchestra), and drinking heavily.

Indeed, in Hobart you really felt as if you had reached the metropolitan end of the line — the last outpost of late 20th-century life before that frozen void called Antarctica (the main Hobart newspaper carries a daily Antarctic weather forecast, for all the locals who want to keep in touch with climatic conditions on the Ronne Ice Shelf).

Given its "last stop" status, it was not surprising to discover that Hobert (in fact, all of Tasmania) was peopled by a quirky supporting cast of characters: Eastern European exiles turned cartoonists. There are macro-neurotic vegans who were engaged in "whole earth agrarian experiments"; assorted refugees from big city life (ad men turned bush pilots) and, more typically, just a lot of extremely smart folk who had come to realise that this island was one of the last great Edenic wildernesses on earth and a unique bolt hole at the bottom of the world.

When I spent a day hiking around Cradle Mountain (a vast national park which, like everything else in Tassie, is about two hours' drive from Hobart), I began to understand the visual uniqueness of this island.

The scenic background was Wagnerian: craggy mountains, an immense glacial lake, a forbidding sky of black, bellicose clouds.

I almost expected to see some Teutonic god (and his attendant blonde Rhine maiden) rise up from this crystalline lake, break into song and then stop to look around at their surroundings and wonder: "Did we get off at the wrong exit on the way to Valhalla?"

Maybe not — because, as I tramped my way around this massive lake (a radiant shaft of light occasionally escaping from behind the inky *Götterdämmerung* sky), the thought struck me that Tasmania still has that raw, primitive call of the wild. And it serves to remind us jaded urbanites that there are places still left on the planet which have only been marginally sullied by human hands.

DOUGLAS KENNEDY

FACT FILE

- **The author travelled to Tasmania with Qantas (0345 747767). Daily flights begin at £875 via Melbourne.**
- ***The Spirit of Tasmania* sails from Melbourne to Devonport three days a week.**
- **Accommodation: In Longford, Woolmers (00 613 6391 1251) is an elegant country house with comfortable stone cottages. In Hobart, the Islington Elegant Private Hotel (00 613 6223 3900) is a Georgian house with splendid rooms at reasonable rates.**
- **When to go: Winter in Tasmania during June-September is, by Australian standards, cold and very wet.**
- **Reading: The Travel Bookshop (0171-229 5260) recommends: *The Potato Factory*, by Bryce Courtenay (Mandarin, £6.99); *The Fatal Shore*, by Robert Hughes (Harvill, £7.99); *Tasmania* (Lonely Planet, £8.99).**

Roo steak for me – and make it rare

Two weeks in Australia are enough to make you seriously consider the options for emigrating to the southern hemisphere. Even without the added incentive of travelling there during its official Year of Good Living, the country offers one of the most exhilarating holidays.

Playing cricket on a pitch created in the middle of a winery in the Macedon Ranges, 30 miles due north of Melbourne, may not be on everyone's itinerary, but it is an example of what can be arranged for sporting enthusiasts.

The Cope-Williams winery at Romsey on the northern slopes of Mount Macedon which specialises in sparkling wines — as well as quince jam, Cherry plum sauce, crab apple jelly with rosemary, zucchini (courgette) pickles and rosehip jelly — is set in an environment of rolling hills where the cricket oval next to the deep red soil of the vineyards seems a perfect addition.

Eating and drinking well in Australia is unavoidable. After cricket at Cope-Williams, kangaroo steaks at the Mountain Inn in Mount Macedon (not far from the famous Hanging Rock where the film *Picnic at Hanging Rock* was made) are obligatory for any tourist in the area who wants to take advantage of native Australian cuisine or "bush tucker". Eve, the hostess, is the sort of extrovert who could persuade a vegetarian to eat kangaroo. Cooked rare, the meat is lean, soft and tender.

Native tucker has taken off in Australia. It has become a multi-million-dollar industry. Andrew Fielke, chef at the Red Ochre Grill in Adelaide, has pioneered the use of Australia's native foods after investigating Aboriginal cooking methods, using wild fruits, such as quandong, and indigenous herbs and spices.

Mr Fielke, who plans to open a restaurant in London, offers a menu that includes emu pâté, possum rillettes, split roast yabbies, Moreton Bay bugs with river mint chilli sauce, and chargrilled kangaroo fillet steak. Koalas, of course, are not on the menu. They appear to be far too cuddly . . . and protected.

Mr Fielke's restaurant in Adelaide is located in the middle of a mile long strip of shops, restaurants and clubs, where in the evenings the twentysomethings cruise up and down in polished convertibles at about 5mph, begging to be noticed by all — or at least some — of the diners sitting at crowded tables on the pavements.

Adelaide is also the home of the famous Adelaide Oval, renowned as the world's prettiest cricket ground and scene of the most dramatic match of the notorious Bodyline series.

Although the Adelaide Oval, like the even grander Melbourne cricket ground, also plays host these days to Australian Rules football matches and pop concerts as part of a drive for commercial success, it remains a place that still has echoes of legendary Test players.

It also has a historic and unique scoreboard which relies on positively Heath Robinson technology — which is all explained in minute detail by Frank, its chief practitioner for the past 14 years. Guided tours can be arranged.

For a holiday as short as two weeks, the visits have to be limited. It is impossible to do justice to states such as Queensland, if you want to spend enough time in Victoria and South Australia. However, it is difficult to imagine not making the effort to fly on to New South Wales to visit Sydney.

Australia is a breathtaking country and of its cities, Sydney is the most exciting for the first-time visitor. Viewed from my hotel bedroom window, the Opera House appeared to change shape and colour as the day wore on and there is certainly no better place to contemplate the venue for the next meal than the Botanical Gardens, situated behind Australia's most famous landmark.

MICHAEL EVANS

FACT FILE

- **The author travelled with the Australian Tourist Commission and Austravel.**
- **Austravel (0171-734 7755) has flights on Britannia Airways from Gatwick from £599 in February/March/April to Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne. Domestic flights with Ansett bookable from £30 per sector.**
- **Accommodation: The author stayed at the Centra hotel in Melbourne bookable through Austravel from £48 per person, and the Hindley Parkroyal in Adelaide, available through Utell (0990 300200) from £99 per double.**

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WORD WATCHING

Answers from page 23

PAK PAI

(a) In Hong Kong, a car used illegally as a taxi. From the Cantonese, literally, "white licence". "Triad gangs are involved in the operation of extortion rackets with mini-buses, pak pais and goods vehicles illegally used for passengers in rural areas."

PIPERADE

(c) A dish originating in the Basque country, consisting of eggs, tomatoes, and peppers, and resembling an omelette. E. H. Clements, *Note of Enchantment*: "Alister. . . ordered a piperade and ate it unhurriedly with a hunk of bread."

RACKENSAK

(b) A native of Arkansas. Probably an altered form of Arkansan. "Artillerists and dragoons, suckers and rackensacks, were all mixed up in confusion."

OCOTILLO

(c) A spiny shrub, *Fouquiera splendens*, of the family *Fouquieraceae*, native to the south-western United States and Mexico and bearing narrow, inconspicuous leaves and panicles of red flowers. "It was not uncommon for visitors to the region to suffer painful and humiliating injuries to their posterior having mistakenly sat down on the mighty little ocotillo."

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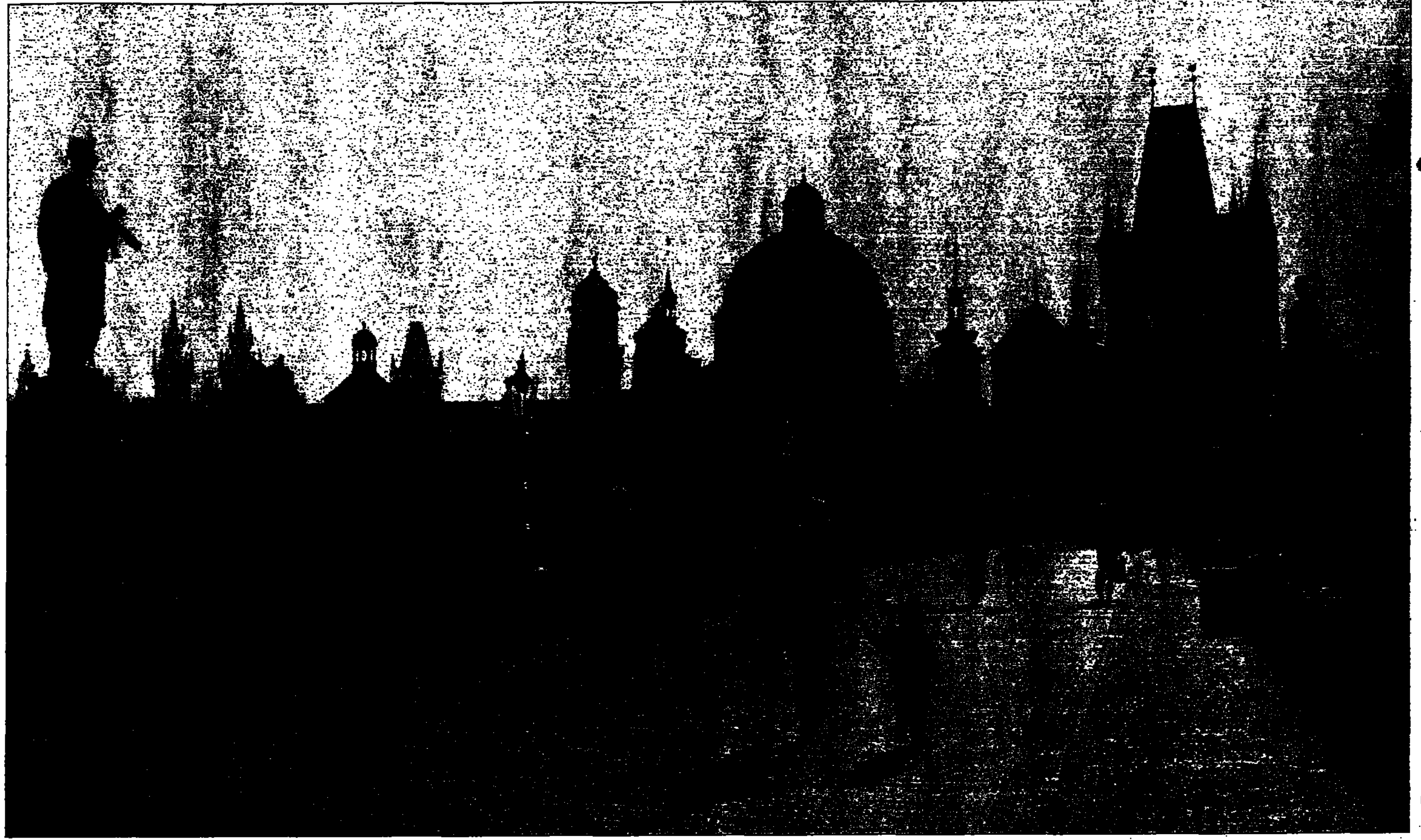
Eastern Europe: Medieval marvels and yellow liqueur in Prague, Art Nouveau and expectation in Latvia

Taverns, turrets and people's opera


PICTURES

Statues line the parapets of Charles Bridge, which spans the Vltava to link Prague's "old" and "new" towns. Both are in fact ancient quarters, their architectural gems remarkably preserved down the ages

It was when I discovered that the Czech word for "yes" is "ano" that I accepted without demur that the language, at least, must remain a closed book. Fortunately this does not matter, as most people in the fabulous city of Prague seem to speak English of a sort: that is, Hollywood American.

The drive into the capital of the Czech Republic is curiously reminiscent of a London suburb — right up until the moment one crosses a fine old bridge surmounted by custard-coloured columns and rattles over cobbles into Prague proper.

The sight of ancient clusters of deep pastel buildings, bristling with onion domes, minarets and Disney-like castle turrets, some sparkling gold, others glinting like silvery coal, stops the heart.

I emerged from the taxi at the Hotel Pariz — an Art Nouveau masterpiece — grateful and sickish, largely due to the jolting on the rounded cobbles that pave the city.

The first thing you notice while wandering the fine, broad main streets and squares (and ferreting down the alleys) is the buzz. Even on a weekday afternoon, the city is alive with people — mostly young, clearly local but as happy as tourists. They, too, seem to take pleasure in the startling and romantic architecture. They, too, pack the pavement cafés and bars.

Western decadence sits well among Eastern European splendour. People point out with pride the capitalist banks, *the giant Tesco and the site of* the coming Marks & Spencer.

However, the map in the city's phone book highlights only the churches and the four branches of McDonald's.

The good feeling extends into the night — bars, discos and clubs stay open far later than in, say, Florence, and a Budvar Budweiser beer (the local pride and joy) should set you back no more than 50p. Things are generally fairly cheap — and that includes the whores. You meet these if you cross the vast and famous Wenceslas Square (which is not a square, just a long and broad street).

One must defend not so much one's honour as one's wallet — pickpocketing is rife, but apparently most other types of crime are virtually unknown. It is quite safe to walk through most of the city at any time.

It is easy to find your way around and the skyline, together with a decent guidebook, soon make one aware of all the essential visits, such as Charles Bridge — a grand 14th-century affair covered with statues as well as mummers, minstrels and dancers. Old Town Square is another, as is the fantastic cathedral of St Vitus (the city's most prominent landmark, also 14th century) — and you must go to the opera. There are superb productions and ridiculously cheap tickets.

After the exertion of all this sightseeing, what you will want is food. And drink: Bechoroova, almost inevitably *— a yellow, herby and potent* liqueur that starts and ends the meal. The "champagne" is sweetish Bohemia Sekt. If you do not want beer, a decent red wine is Svatovavrinecke (not easy to say after a couple of bottles — or indeed, before). The clergy has been drinking it since 1264: it is actually an altar wine, but it seems to be everywhere. Food is good and hearty: goose, venison, duck, pork — and something called "three sorts of dumpling" which translates as three sorts of awful.

Puddings are rich: pastry, cream, cherries, cream, plums, cream, a slug of herby liqueur and maybe just a bowl of cream to finish off with. You will not starve in Prague.

One is reluctant to leave this glorious, gutsy and beautiful city, but the one thing that lured me away with ease was *the prospect of the journey* home on the Venice Simplon Orient-Express.

I had always wanted to go on this train and it did not disappoint. Contrary to all the advertisements, you do not have to sport shingles, cloches and long cigarette holders, nor moustaches and monocles, but they certainly do not discourage it. The lavish brochure advises that it is impossible to overdress, and one or two dozen Americans had taken it at its word.

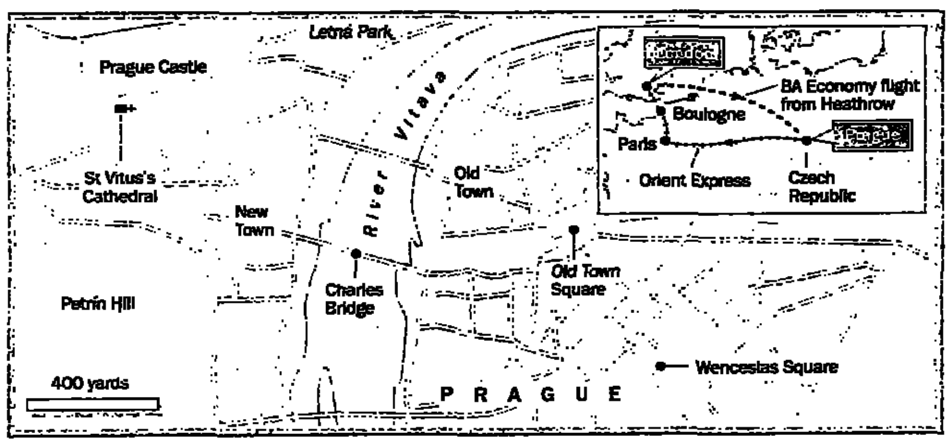
The corridor throughout this gorgeously rich and stylish train is as narrow as you might expect. If you find yourself behind a lady in a frou-frou frock, you could well find progress slow. The bar is lavish yet discreet (how did they squeeze in the grand *piano?) but pride of place goes* to the pair of dining cars, superb and glossy in veneers, Lalique crystal panels and pleated pink silk-shaded lamps (for sale at £350 a pot).

The food is remarkably good and so, too, is the service. It is important to enter into the spirit of this delightful 24-hour game.

And so to bed in my luxury Havana humidor-like cabin as the bogies beneath rhythmically strum. We fly through the night, pausing next morning in Paris to take on fabulous provisions and by Boulogne (where you transfer via the Sea Cat to the equally roomy and elegant Pullman to London Victoria) you feel quite comfortable with the idea of living on the train for ever.

"One gentleman," says the chief steward, "comes on every trip. He says he loves to live on the Orient Express, and hopes to die on it too — preferably in his sleep."

JOSEPH CONNOLLY



FACT FILE

- The author travelled with City Escapades in conjuction with Orient Express and Cedok.
- City Escapades (0171-563 8959) offers many permutations of trip to Prague. Prices start at £292 for flights and three nights B&B. A three-night package including outbound flights and return Orient Express to London starts at £1,345.
- Orient Express (0171-805 5100) offers a similar package from £1,350; trips incorporating Vienna or Venice also available.
- Accommodation: Hotel Pariz (00 4202 24 222151) has double rooms from £160.
- For more information: Czech Republic Tourist Authority (0171-291 9920).
- Reading: The Travel Bookshop (0171-229 5260) recommends: *Magic Prague*, by Angelo Maria Ripellino (Picador, £9.99).

An enduring Baltic beauty

For a country as small as Latvia (population 2,600,000), Riga might seem an extravagantly large capital with its 900,000 inhabitants. Yet this was a great city state and the queen of the eastern Baltic long before St Petersburg was a twinkle in anyone's eye. Founded by the Teutonic knights in 1201, Riga later joined the Hanseatic League, a powerful trading confederation which stretched along the Baltic littoral and into the North Sea as far west as Bruges. The league shaped northern European trade for the next 300 years until the transatlantic navigators discovered the New World.

Like many Eastern European cities after communist rule, Riga gives the feeling of a place waiting for something to happen. This has something to do with *its low levels of traffic* and almost inordinate sense of spaciousness. The city suffered terrible destruction during the Second World War — from the Germans in 1941 and the Russians in 1944. Trapped between powerful and predatory neighbours, Latvians frequently found themselves fighting on opposite sides, father against son, brother against brother.

The city's buildings have occasional Stalinist echoes, but the view from the top of St Peter's Church reveals a panorama of tiled roofs, spires and onion domes. St Peter's was largely destroyed by artillery bombardment, yet its warm red brick Gothic vaulting has been rebuilt and its spire restored to make it one of the finest Baltic churches.

Riga is a city where gems of architecture seem to spring out from the most unexpected places. The Art Nouveau quarter, with its Jugendstil buildings, many of which are the work of Michael Eisenstein (father of the Soviet filmmaker Sergei) is perhaps without peer in Europe. When fully restored its streets will be one of the glories of Baltic urban architecture.

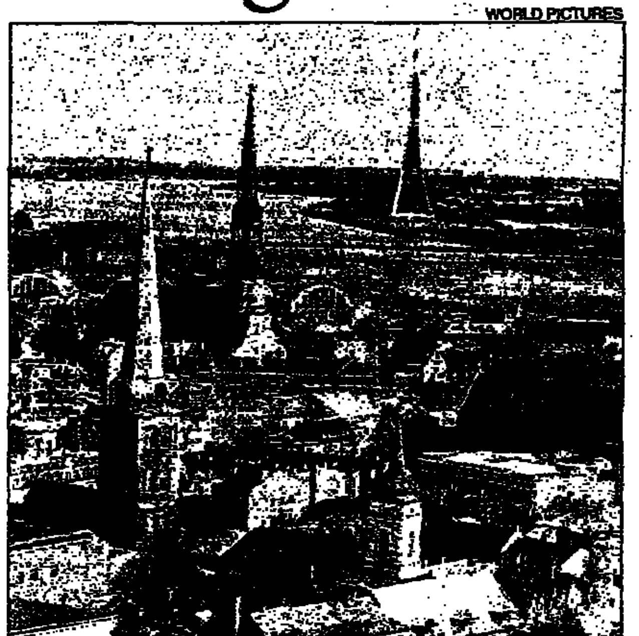
Away from its cities, Latvia is a land of forests and fertile plains which seem to run straight into the tideless Baltic. There are no vast distances to be travelled in this microcosm of a country. Only 50km to the south of Riga is the Rundale Palace, built in the 18th century as the summer residence of the Dukes of Courland. The funds for this imposing Baltic Versailles were extorted from the Russian empress Anna Ivanovna by a crafty gigolo called Ernst Johann Biron, who was to become Duke of Courland in 1737.

The besotted tsarina placed at Biron's disposal her favourite architect, Rastrelli. The death of his mistress brought an end to Biron's promising career, but he outlived this setback. Rundale was completed in 1768; its handsome exterior and lofty salons make it one of the Baroque gems of northern Europe.

Springtime is an especially attractive season to visit Latvia. In the Zemgale, the wetlands in the south of the country, the storks are settling into trees and on to rooftops after their long journey from Africa, and the farmers can *breathe again at this renewed* promise of continuing fertility. And on the coast it is a strange sensation to walk in shirtsleeves down a beach of silver sand to a silent sea, still frozen out to the horizon.

PETER DAVIES

WORLD PICTURES



The Daugava River flows past Riga's domes and spires

FACT FILE

- The author travelled with Gunnel Travel Service (01473 828855). *From* September, a three-night stay in a four-star Riga hotel will cost from £347 based on two sharing. Intratravel (0171-323 3305) offers flights and three nights B&B from £300.
- Riga Airlines (01293 535727) has fares from Gatwick from £245.
- *Reading:* The Travel Bookshop (0171-229 5260) recommends: *Professor Martens' Departure*, by Jaan Kross (Harvill, £8.99); *Bradt Guide Latvia* (£10.95).

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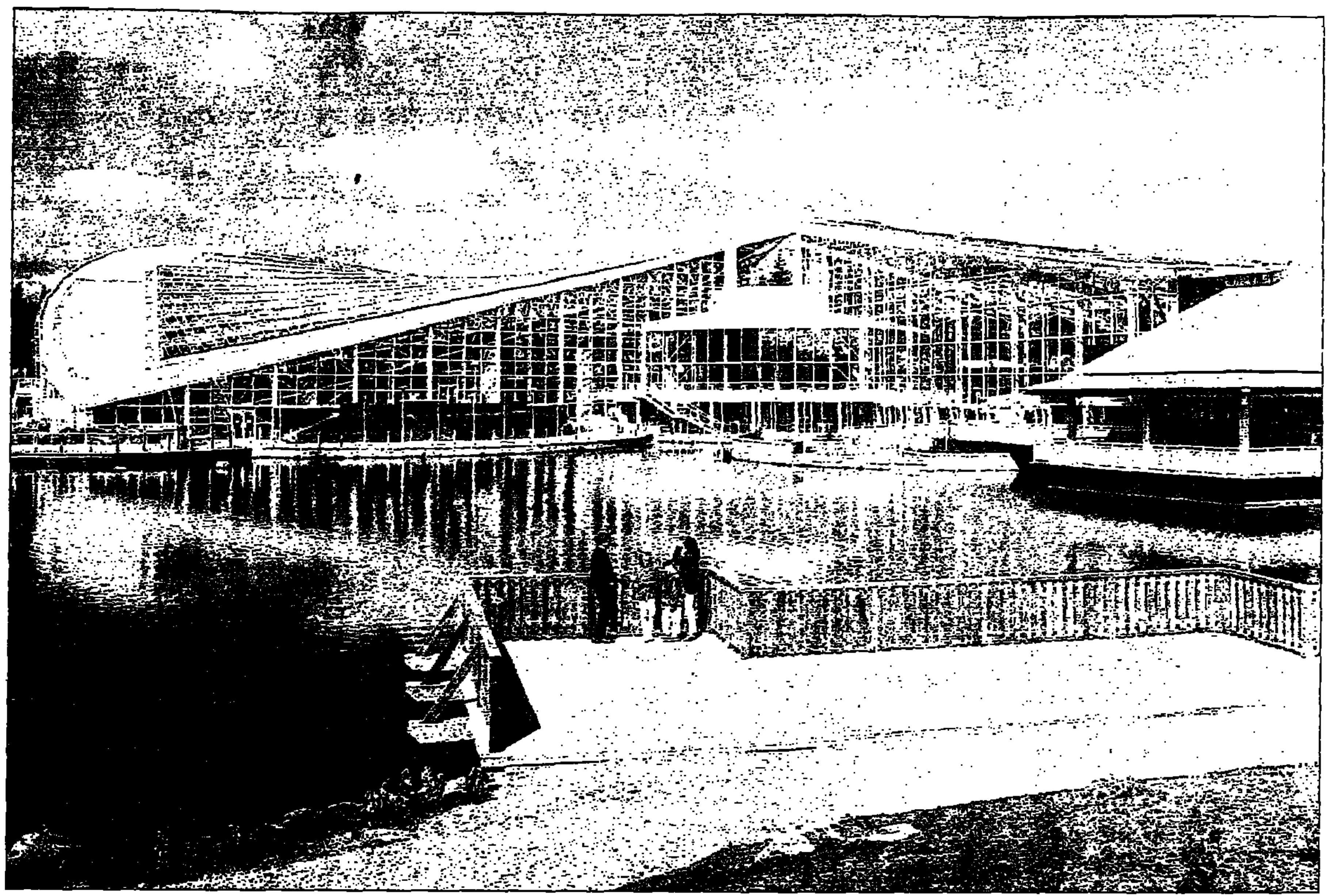
Britain: Rank has embraced the holiday village idea, but will it be able to surpass its rival, Center Parcs?

What's the story? Oasis glory


The Butterfly building at Oasis houses pools, flumes, wild water rapids, a bowling alley, children's club, cinema, shops and restaurants with boating lake in front

Center Parcs have had it their own way for ten years in Britain. Well-heeled families have been arriving in droves at Sherwood Forest or Elveden, Suffolk, or Longleat, Wiltshire and having a terrific time, telling their friends not to be put off by the tacky name because it is perfectly tasteful, although not cheap ... oh, and when is half-term so we can book again? But now the woodland world of chalets and heated swimming domes has a competitor.

Not far from the Lake District a new "holiday village" called Oasis has arrived, adopting the sound business strategy that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery and an almost guaranteed route to success. Despite this being the first attempt by Rank in this field (compared with the vast experience here and abroad of Center Parcs, a Dutch company), it looks as if it will flourish.

First, however, the voice of the environmentally minded holidaymaker: must we chop down huge swaths of forest to build these places? Yes, if you want a holiday village, you make a big hole in a wood. This kind of enterprise would not work in open fields, or on the edge of towns. The whole appeal lies in escaping from the weekly cycle of work to a carefully crafted mix of man-made pleasures and secluded natural beauty.

'No cars are allowed so you cycle everywhere — young children adore the freedom'

In the case of Oasis, carved out of Whinfell Forest, Cumbria — a commercial conifer plantation grown in the 19th century on the Lowther Estate — the objections cannot be as strong as if ancient wood had been felled.

No cars are allowed, so you cycle everywhere on roads, from your lodge (chalet-like, self-catering, very comfortable) to your chosen activity (there are many) and around the 400-acre site. Young children, unaccustomed to such freedom on two wheels, adore it. If Dad is here to find a quiet corner to read a book, he is on the wrong holiday. He could find plenty of isolated spots if he really wanted, though he would do better to head off into the wood nearest to home.

When a red squirrel put in a skittering appearance on our first morning a few yards from the lodge, the punctilious environmental claims of the owners began to have substance. During construction nothing was removed from the site but was "redistributed".

Trees were removed with root balls intact and transported to suitable sites, rare plants protected, badger setts avoided and gates set into the boundary fence for them. Red squirrel feeders have actually increased numbers, they claim. Rabbits are everywhere — even pine martens, apparently, who are known to eat red squirrel tartare.

One afternoon a cheerful forest ranger, at ease with seven or seventy-year-olds, took a small group of us on a "discovery" walk out of the forest and beyond. For 15 quiet minutes a buzzard's nest high in a Scots pine showed little sign of activity. Then a red squirrel scampered up the trunk and suddenly, through the binoculars, a wing flapped and a snowy white and grey head appeared with a disdainful stare. A pheasant rustled through the bracken below. The squirrel, having located a feeder, settled down to an early supper. We strolled back for ours.

If you do not bring food to cook in your lodge, but rely on the wide range of restaurants on site, it will become an expensive stay. We tried several places — a pub (part of the Tom Cobleigh chain, gimmicky, intrusive music, standard pub fare, but a parents' dream of a play area); Italian (good); Indian (swish, food fine but pricy, service charming but chaotic); and French (swisher still, pleasant, almost empty).

With only two days to explore, we headed rashly for the water on our first morning. Kayaking and sailing sounded like a bracing start to the day. I was buffeted relentlessly by the boom of my topper in an unpredictable wind and landed humiliated and exhilarated in equal measure. The artificial lake, overlooked by the dramatic outline of the Butterfly building, is just large enough for a handful of sailors, but looked too small for a combination of canoeists, windsurfers, sailors, banana boat riders and pedalos.

The airy, attractive Butterfly building is the focal point of Oasis, and houses the World of Water (pools, flumes, wild water rapids — a big favourite), the bowling alley, the children's club, a cinema, shops and restaurants.

The other main building, supposed to be the biggest wooden building in Europe, is the Country Club. This is the sports complex with the Sanctuary spa attached.

Apart from the usual offerings such as short tennis, squash, badminton, snooker and aerobics, you can play ricochet, a racket game similar to squash, but in a smaller court where the ball can bounce off the ceiling and the scoring is done electronically. There are only five courts in Britain, but more than 200 on the Continent, mostly in Holland and Germany. This game is less intimidating than squash — for a start, the ball does not need warming up — and deserves to catch on.

The Sanctuary health spa looks superb. Two of my party underwent Rasul treatment, which has something to do with three colours of mud, large turquoise ceramic chairs, herbal steam, unexpected showers and Arabic ingenuity. The dry flotation tank, which involves lying wrapped in a rubber sheet on a bed of warm water with the lights dimmed, was immensely relaxing. These treatments are pricey, but the quality makes them worth it if you like that kind of thing.

Oasis prides itself on several innovations that are supposed to be superior to Center Parcs — such as prebooking of activities before you arrive, use of smart cards for payment and a customs-style check-in. During our stay the Freedom cards were only working sporadically, but are a good idea. They are aimed at children to make them aware of how much they are spending.

Before Rank moved in, Center Parcs viewed Whinfell Forest as a potential site, but rejected it. Rain and snow in winter may have been one factor; the competing attraction of the nearby Lakes drawing visitors away from the site another. But Rank has taken the plunge and, despite delaying the opening because of technical problems and leaving customers in the lurch (though compensating them with a free visit) and despite minor teething problems, it has done a fine job.

Scots pine forest, with virtually no foliage below about 40 feet, does leave the lodges less secluded than at the Center Parcs I visited, but little can be done about that.

I have never known anyone return from these leisure breaks, whether at Oasis or Center Parcs, without having thoroughly enjoyed themselves. A three or four-night stay is an ideal length of stay. People will keep on going.

Oasis is now planning its second village, near Folkestone, Kent, but have met some determined local opposition. Its plans are on hold. Britain has four of these villages and, such is their popularity, could probably accommodate another without reaching saturation. But how much more suitable forest is there left?

TIMOTHY RICE

Scots pines at Oasis do not allow for leafy seclusion at the lodges

The merry menu of Sherwood

A hedgehog scurrying around our patio at 10pm, the expression on two-year-old Jack's face as six ducklings waddled confidently towards him from the lake and Tom, nine, sighing contentedly, saying "I wish we could live here, Mum": these are some memorable moments from our visit to the Center Parcs holiday village in Sherwood Forest, Nottinghamshire.

Not being a sporty type, it was against my better judgment that I allowed myself to be persuaded to visit Center Parcs, and I can honestly say that in 11 years of married life it is one of the few times my husband has been proved right.

The Sherwood Forest village was the first of Center Parcs' three sites in England and celebrates its tenth anniversary this year. I had heard about the Subtropical Swimming Paradise and the extensive sporting and leisure facilities, but I had not fully appreciated the commitment to the environment until I stood in our villa, gazing through our French windows into a secluded woodland glade. The site has been planned so that, although the villas are grouped in small blocks of three or four together, each has its own unrestricted view.

Riding through woodland is just one of the many pastimes available at Center Parcs

This careful planning is evident throughout. The village square, with its shops and restaurants, has a bustling atmosphere, the country club is surrounded by more open countryside where guests play tennis, ride or practise their golf and the lakeside is tranquil. Because the site covers 400 acres and there are so many things to do, nowhere ever felt crowded.

The Subtropical Swimming Paradise is just that — palm trees, tropical foliage, breathtaking waterchutes, a Miró-inspired toddler's paddling pool, even hot whirlpools — the four of us spent three happy hours there.

Banning cars was an inspired decision. Even people like me, who have not ridden a bike for more than 15 years, are happy to wobble about, secure in the knowledge that I would not be crushed under the wheels of a passing juggernaut. The exhilaration of freewheeling past my husband and sons more than makes up for my slight mishap with a bridge further along.

Unfortunately, I could not visit the new beauty therapy centre because we had to spend Sunday afternoon travelling into Worksop, 30 minutes' taxi drive away (we had travelled up by train), to the nearest doctor's surgery. Jack was suddenly unwell, so we took him to the medical centre at Center Parcs to be told that there was no doctor on call at the site — an omission I found staggering.

We could not wait until the next day as Jack had developed tonsillitis. Although the staff in reception were helpful the expensive round trip, plus a mile's walk to a pharmacy and back, blighted an otherwise promising day.

But what with the pony rides, adventure golf, tenpin bowling, children's disco, cycling and nature watching, overall it was a great success.

ANN HARRISON

OASIS FACT FILE

- Oasis Lakeland Forest Village, near Penrith, Cumbria (booking: 0990 086000).
- A typical two-bedroom forest lodge costs £437 for a three-night stay (Fri-Mon), £509 for four nights (Mon-Fri), and £804 for a week (Mon-Mon or Fri-Fri). This includes access to the World of Water, play areas and free entertainments.
- Examples of charges: bicycles £8.50 per break (adult), £5 children; ricochet £5 half-hour for two; guided forest walks £2.50 adult, £1 child; French restaurant £68 for two, three courses with wine.
- Activities outside the village include clay-pigeon shooting, fly fishing, rock climbing, pony trekking and 4x4 driving.

CENTER PARCS FACT FILE

- Centre Parcs, Sherwood Forest, Nottinghamshire (booking: 0990 200300)
- A typical two-bedroom villa costs £338 for a three-night weekend stay (Fri-Mon), £405 for four nights Mon-Fri and £594 for a week (Fri-Fri or Mon-Mon). This includes access to the swimming paradise and play areas.
- Examples of charges: bicycles £9.50 adult, £5 children (for weekend); guided woodland walk £7.50 for adult and child (minimum age ten), including breakfast; Le Caprice restaurant, main course £10-£16 per person.
- Activities outside village include horse riding, laser clay shooting, golf course and field archery.

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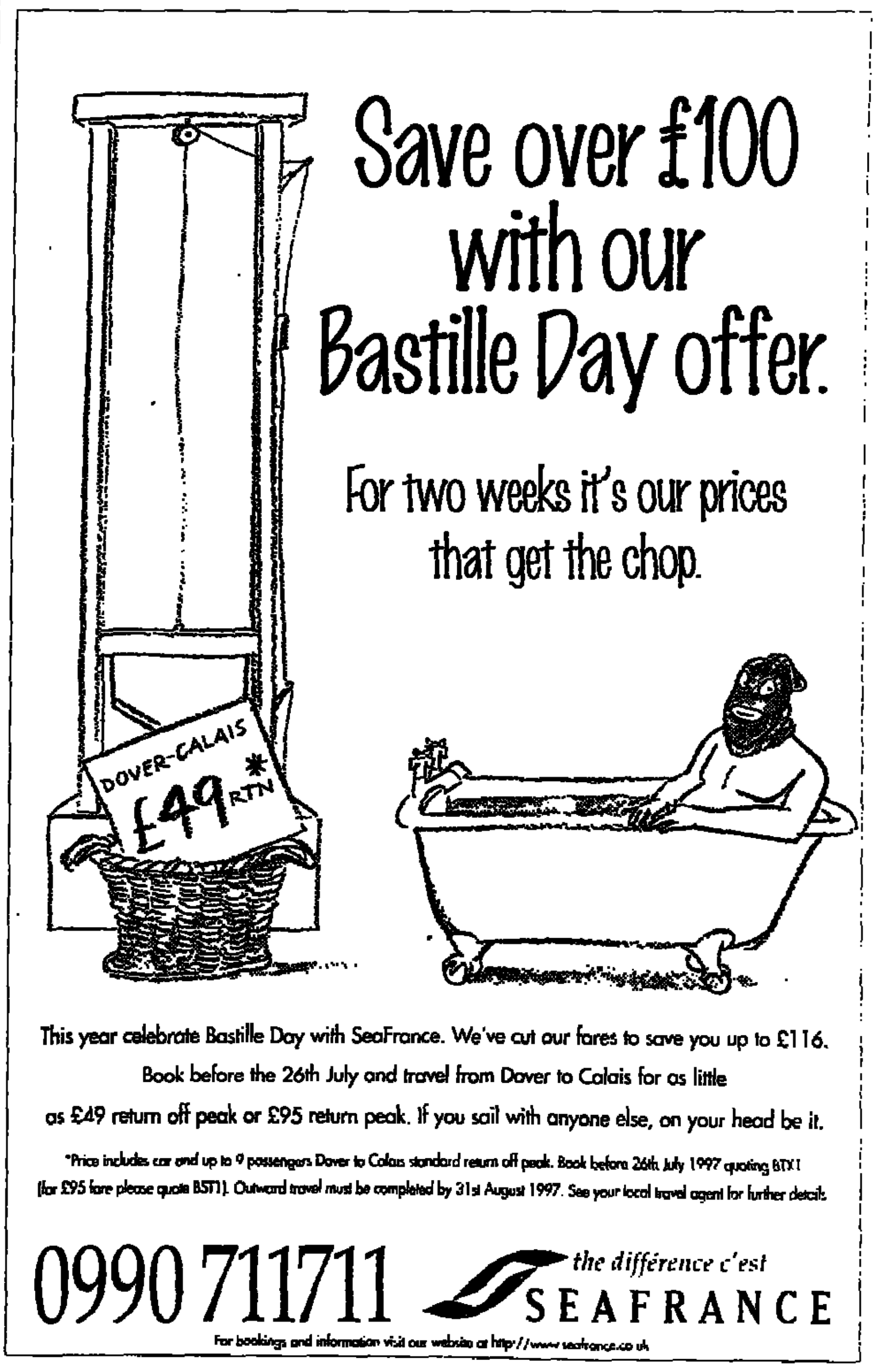
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AROUND THE WORLD: A WEEKEND GUIDE

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The former Second World War RAF base on Gan Island in the Maldives has recently been turned into the Ocean Reef Club resort, offered by Kuoni for £699 a week

Get going for Gan

THE Second World War RAF base on Gan Island (codenamed "Port T"), on the southernmost atoll in the Maldives, is the site of the recently opened Ocean Reef Club resort offered by Kuoni (01306 743000).

When the Maldives became independent in 1965, Britain retained the lease on Gan until 1975. Now the sergeants' quarters accommodate tourists, the officers' mess is a restaurant, the officers' quarters are used by visiting Maldives officials, and the church has been converted to a mosque.

Tourists and locals generally live on separate islands in the Maldives, but holidaymakers on Gan can see something of the traditions and daily life of the Maldivians by cycling around the various islands on the atoll, which are linked by a causeway.

Keen divers can explore the wreck of the oil tanker *British Loyalty*, damaged by a Japanese submarine in 1944 and later scuttled. Kuoni's all-inclusive holiday with full board and drinks, watersports and entertainment costs from £699 a week.

JILL CRAWSHAW'S INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL TIPS

■ **SOME interesting small cities are included in Citalia's (0181-686 5533) City Breaks in Italy. In Sicily, the old Norman-Byzantine stronghold of Palermo and Agrigento (the latter a modern town but with magnificent Greek temples) have been added to delightful Taormina. Three nights' B&B starts at £356, £341 and £317 respectively. On the mainland, a break in Tuscany's medieval town of San Gimiguano costs £277, while both Orvieto and Urbino in Umbria start at £268, also for three nights' B&B and flights. Car hire is recommended for some destinations.**

Parador pass

SPANISH paradors are offering five-night passes at a fixed price of £260 for twin or double accommodation. The "Go As You Please" pass, valid until December 20, is flexible, allowing all five nights in one parador, one night in each of five or any other combination. Other special offers include: a 20 per cent discount at selected paradors for those staying on half-board for a minimum of two nights; for senior citizens (aged 60 or over), some paradors offer a 35 per cent discount between October and December. All parador accommodation can be booked through Keytel International (0171-402 8182).

Greek budget

POPULAR with families because of its sandy beaches, and recently awarded 42 EU Blue Flags for cleanliness, Halkidiki in Macedonia, Greece, is hoping to attract budget holidaymakers by offering fixed-price food and drink in its restaurants and hotels. The set price of a glass of wine, ouzo or a coffee is 300 drachmas (68p); a brandy, 450 drachmas (£1.05); a salad, 650 drachmas (£1.50) and a moussaka, 850 drachmas (£1.95). The drachma has fallen by 16 per cent against sterling since this time last year and now stands at 435 to £1.

A peak-season package costs about £400 a week, £460 for two weeks' self-catering, or £600 for two weeks' half-board. Nearby in Thessalonika — Cultural Capital of Europe for 1997 — there are many summer events and the treasures of Mount Athos are on display.

Get dug in

A BUSY 12-day tour for enthusiastic gardeners by Cedarberg Southern Africa Travel (0181-941 1717) combines the floral highlights of the Cape with visits to wine estates, whale watching, a game reserve, safaris to track white rhino and wetland wildlife. Also included is a steam train trip and a stay in a traditional Zulu village.

The Western Cape claims the richest floral diversity in the world, with more plant species on Table Mountain alone than in the whole of Britain. Garden lovers can tick them off on visits to the Kirstenboch Botanical Gardens, the Karoo, Stellenbosch University Garden, the Harold Porter Botanical Reserve and Fernkloof Nature Reserve. The tour in October costs £1,770 half-board, including flights.

■ **SEVILLE's Isla Magica theme park opened in June following an investment of about £60 million. The central theme is Spanish Voyages of Discovery to the New World, with fortresses, rollercoasters, lost temples, the island of Eldorado and pirates, including Francis Drake to be tackled and repulsed. The Isla Magica is open seven days a week from 11am to at least midnight until the end of November. A day pass costs about £13 for adults, £9 for children and senior citizens.**

Night trains

TRAVELLING on overnight trains can offer a double advantage — you save time and also the cost of a night in a hotel. The latest edition of Thomas Cook Publishing's *Guide to European Night Trains* is full of useful information.

From Zurich to Barcelona with an overnight in a four-berth compartment costs SwFr170 (about £73) with breakfast included: Vienna to Amsterdam costs 2,706 schillings (£138) in a second-class three-berth compartment, or AS4,820 schillings (£245) in a first-class single compartment. Travelling from Brussels to Rome is BFr5,840 (£100) in a six-berth couchette, BFr6,780 (£117) in a second-class three-berth compartment. The guide costs £7.95 from bookshops or direct from Thomas Cook Publishing (01733 503571/2).

Cuba to offer all-in resorts

A tourism revolution is planned for Cuba, spearheaded by a British tour operator in partnership with Fidel Castro's Government.

The Canadian parent company of Bluebird Holidays, LCI, has struck a deal to progressively take over management of several of the hotels in the Government-owned Grupo Gran Caribe chain, which has 6,000 rooms in 18 hotels on Cuba.

LCI also has plans to build, in partnership with Grupo Gran Caribe, 11 more four- and five-star hotels in four undeveloped resort areas of Cuba, which will boost the island's bedstock by a sixth.

Bluebird is earmarked as the main vehicle to fill the rooms, with plans to double tourism numbers from the UK and the rest of Europe within five years.

Stephen Powell, Bluebird managing director, said: "There is a shortage of accommodation at the top end of the market in Cuba. I compare it to the Dominican Republic.

"With these developments, Cuba will take off. Among the European countries, Britain is the baby in terms of potential growth. But Cuba is becoming very fashionable."

An estimated 10,000 Britons will visit Cuba this summer. Bluebird wants to double the number and carry 100,000 from Europe in total within five years. The company is already in talks with airlines and other operators to run charter aircraft direct to the island next summer.

The new developments are based on the all-inclusive concept that has swept through the Caribbean in the past decade, and include golf, private beaches and watersports.

In January, LCI took over the management of its first Grupo Gran Caribe hotel, the 400-room Pelicano in Cayo Largo.

Meanwhile, work will start on the 11 new properties on August 1. When completed, from 1999, they will add 4,200 rooms to the island's total bedstock of 24,000 rooms.

Several other hotel chains are looking to Cuba for expansion, with the Spanish Sol Melia group already managing seven properties on the island.

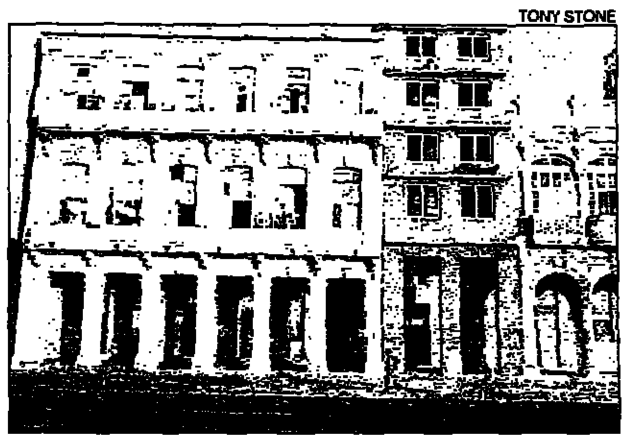
The Cuban Government's desire to work with foreign companies is partly reflected in the fact that the poor quality of existing hotels has been a restraining factor in tourism growth. Only 11 per cent of rooms are considered to be five-star rated.

With airlines barred from flying to Cuba from US airports, Canada is the biggest market to Cuba, where demand is expected to fill the new properties during winter. LCI is primarily looking to Europe and other countries to fill the hotels in summer.

The new hotels will be built 65km east of the capital Havana and on the islands of Juvenes and Cayo Largo.

STEVEN KEENAN

TONY STONE



The age of Cuba's hotels has restrained tourism growth

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TRAVEL NEWS

Holiday price war

■ **A DISCOUNTING** war has broken out among travel agents following poor sales of summer 1998 holidays.

Thomas Cook is offering 12 per cent off holidays booked by this Monday after figures showed half of all bookings for next summer were for May and June. Dido Harding, head of retail marketing, said: "People just don't feel comfortable about booking next year's holiday until they have returned from this year's."

The Thomas Cook offer was immediately bettered, however, by rivals Going Places and Lunn Poly, which are offering 13 per cent off on certain holidays.

The discount battle follows the earliest-ever launch, in May, of brochures for the following summer. But only 180,000 holidays were sold in May, less than 2 per cent of capacity.

■ **HOLIDAYMAKERS** heading for the Florida beaches or skiers travelling to Colorado face a double tax whammy this winter.

The UK is to double Air Passenger Duty from £10 to £20 for flights outside the EU on November 1.

And now the USA is planning to quintuple its Airport Taxes from $6 to $31 (£19) from October 1. Visitors to America already pay £18 per person in US customs and security charges.

The charges, which are absorbed into tour operator or airline prices, will mean 10 per cent of holiday prices consisting solely of taxes, according to Airtours.

■ **MORE BRITONS** are going to Goa this winter than Majorca or France, according to Thomas Cook figures.

The company sold nearly 21,000 winter holidays to India by the end of May, making it the fifth most popular destination behind the Canaries, mainland Spain, Florida and the Caribbean. Overall, sales are up by a third year-on-year.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Paying the price for a seaview

From Dr Malcolm Walles, Leeds:

WHEN booking an Airtours holiday to Gran Canaria, the salesgirl in the Going Places travel agency stated that a seaview was included in the price. But at the hotel, I was told I could only have a seaview if I paid a not inconsiderable supplement. When I complained, the statement was denied and they referred me to a form I had signed which showed the seaview as a request which could not be guaranteed.

I did not, and would never interpret "cannot be guaranteed" to mean "will not be provided unless extra money is paid". It seems to me the wording is misleading.

☐ DR WELLES signed a form requesting a seaview and balcony. But Airtours did not have any seaview rooms in its allocation at the Melia Tamarindos in San Agustin.

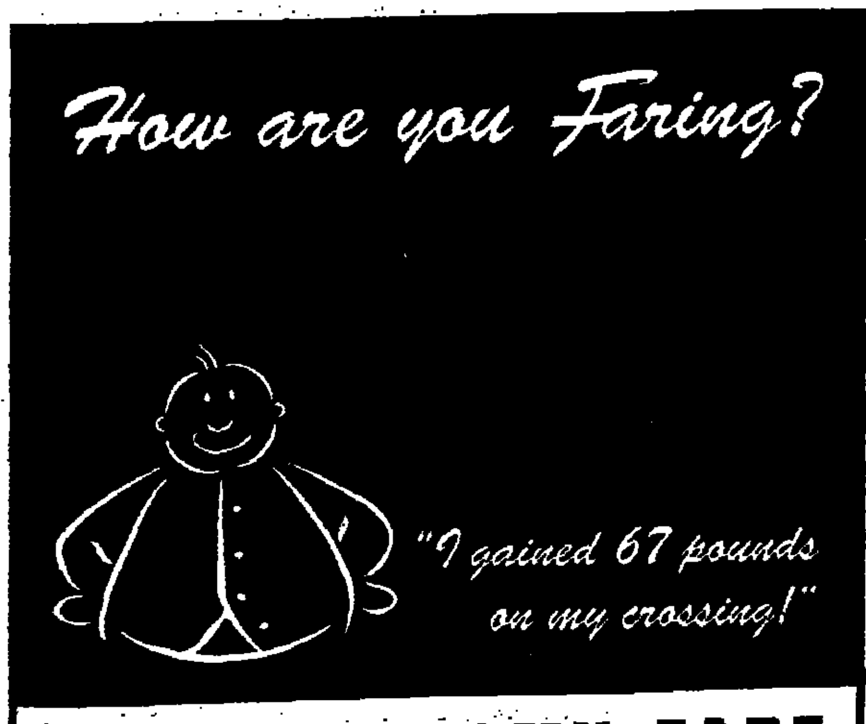
Going Places admits that when it receives special requests, it uses a standard form and had no on-screen information to indicate no seaview rooms were available.

"It would be very difficult to find out what allocation of rooms each operator has in every case," said a spokeswoman. A spokeswoman for the hotel said it is common practice to charge a supplement for a room with a view. The rate offered was probably the public rate, she added, which would be higher than that negotiated with Airtours.

● *Write to: Letters, Travel Department*, The Times, *1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN, or fax 0171-782 5124.*

THURSDAY **TRAVEL**

For all the latest news on bargain hotels, flights and holidays see this Thursday's *Times*



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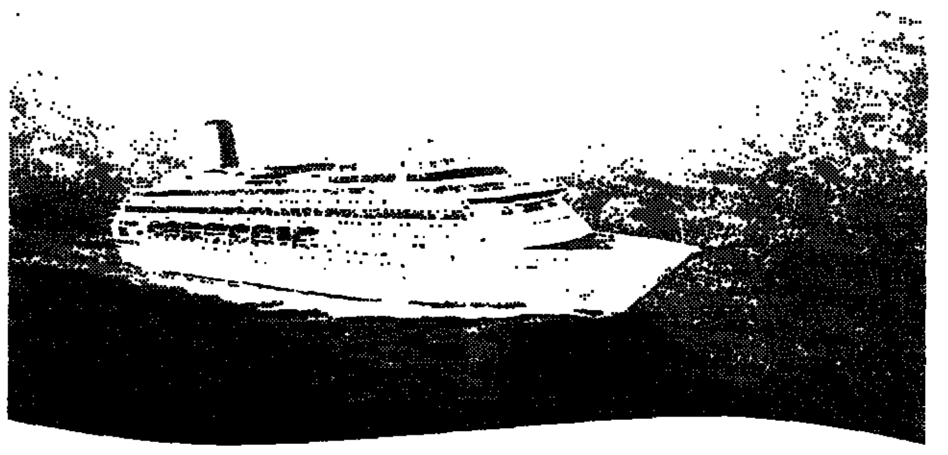

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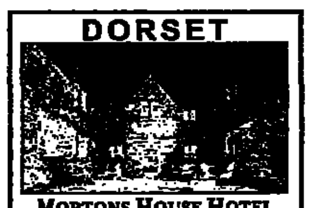

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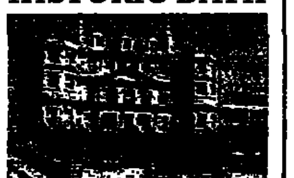

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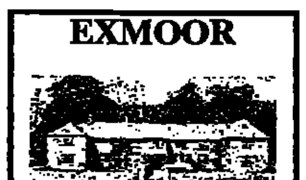

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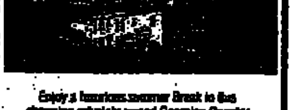

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AA Romantic Hotel
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RAC - 3 Merit Awards

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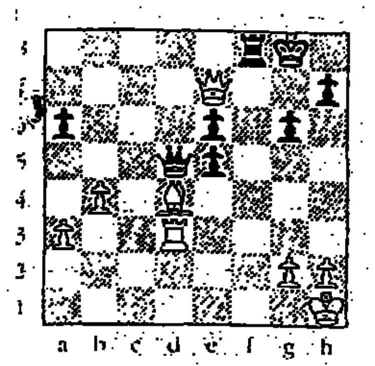
[illegible] منذ الأصل

CHESS

by Raymond Keene

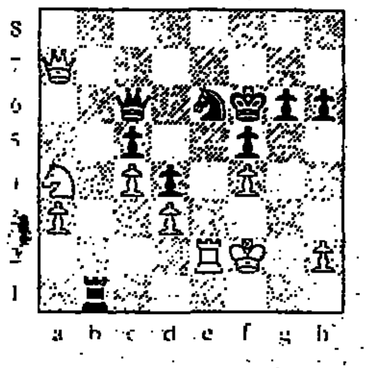
HE daily Winning Move puzzle imulates great reader interest. In ie next few weeks I shall deal with ie best of your queries. The following position was published on uesday, April 22. Black to play. rom the game Tirard-Rotstein, annes 1997. Black could play 1 ... xd4 but White would still be in the ame. Instead, he found something nuch stronger.



Solution:
1 ... Qxd4! wins as if 2 Rxd4 Rf1 is mate. 2 Qxe6+ Kh8 does not help.

E. Johnson of Bristol suggests 1 ... Rf1+ 2 Bg1 Qxd3, but after 3 Qxe6+ Kf8 4 Qxe5, Black would still have many difficulties to overcome. Several readers, including Chris Armstrong of London, wonder why White does not try 2 Qxf8+ Kxf8 3 Rxd4 exd4 4 Kg1, preventing the black pawn from queening. This is White's best try, but Black is a pawn ahead in the endgame and will win easily.

Winning Move published Thursday, May 15. White to play. From the game Bologan-Hubner, German Bundesliga 1997. Here White continued 1 Qh7 and lost.

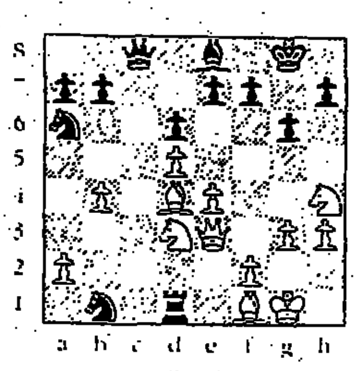


Solution:
1 Nxc5! Qxc5 (1 ... Nxc5 2 Qe7 mate) 2 Rxe6+ Kxe6 3 Qxc5 winning.

Stuart Sheering of Dorset suggests that 1 Nxc5 can be met by 1 ... Rf1+. However, after 2 Kxf1 Qh1+ 3 Kf2 Qxh2+ 4 Ke1 the white king escapes to safety.

Winning Move published on Friday, February 14. White to play. This position is from the game Agdestein-Adams, Iceland 1994.

As well as being Norway's top grandmaster, Simen Agdestein has also played international football for his country. How did he put the ball in the back of the net in this game from his match against Britain's Michael Adams?



Solution:
1 Nf5! creates too many threats for Black to cope with, eg. 1 ... exf5 2 Qg5+ mating, or 1 ... Qc7 2 Qh6 again mating.

Mrs S. Hamilton of Chichester wonders why White cannot play 1 Qh6 immediately. The reason is 1 ... f6, which defends against the checkmate threat on g7.

Remember, everyone who writes in for the first time will be rewarded with a free copy of the colourful *Chess Monthly* magazine, while all those whose queries or comments are published for the first time will receive a free quarterly subscription. So keep the queries, games and positions coming.

The first Mind Sports Olympiad, featuring more than 30 different thinking sports will take place at the Festival Hall in London from August 18-24. The chess section offers £10,000 in prizes. Entry details on 0171-485 9146.

WINNING MOVE

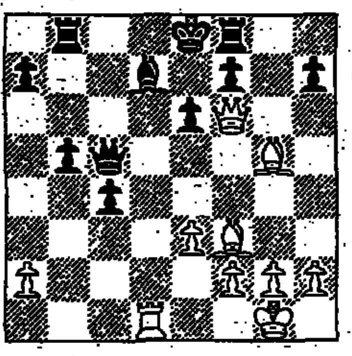
By Raymond Keene

White to play. This position is from the game Erbis - Kempff, Stuttgart 1954. White has very strong play along the h4-d8 diagonal and on the open d-file. How did he now combine these two avenues of pressure to force a quick win?

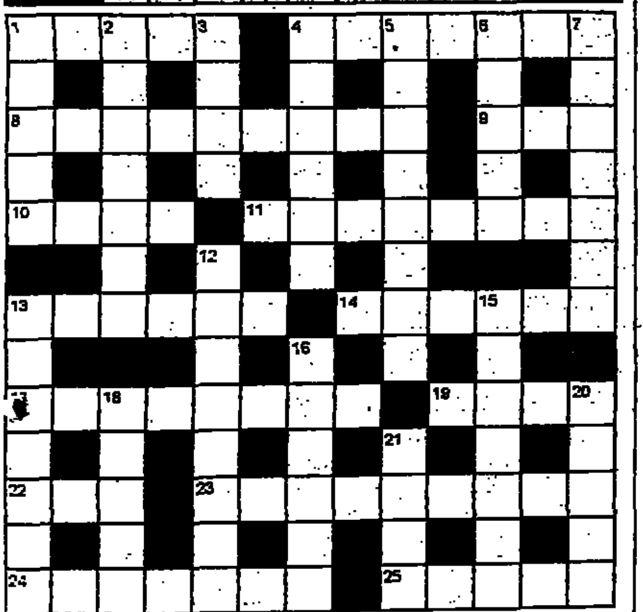
Send your answer on a postcard to *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. The first correct answer drawn on Thursday will win a year's subscription to the Staunton Society, which includes a free invitation to the annual dinner at Simpson's-in-the-Strand. The answer will be published next Saturday.

Last week's solution: 1 Qxf6

Last week's winner: J Cragg, London.



TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1144

ACROSS
1 Allure, entice (5)
4 Prodigal person (7)
8 Making phone call; in jeopardy (2,3,4)
9 Pendulum weight; cut short (3)
0 Movement of sea; sounds like *drew* (4)
1 Shopkeeper (8)
3 Filament, fine line (6)
Macgregor outlaw (*Sir W. Scott*) (3,3)
7 Altered (8)
Step (of ladder) (4)
Record; fuel for fire (3)
Life of luxury (Italian) (5,4)
Falkland capital; searcher for Livingstone (7)
Fragment (5)

DOWN
1 Freshwater speckled fish (5)
2 Bullfighter (7)
3 (Arduous) journey (4)
4 Table attendant (6)
5 Thomas —, furniture-maker (8)
6 Flouter of authority (5)
7 Freedom (7)
12 Flower, has trumpet (8)
13 Burial mound (7)
15 Work pattern (7)
16 Thames regatta town (6)
18 Religious doctrine (5)
20 Serious; Meldrew's *one foot* in it (5)
21 Shed tears (4)

LUTION TO NO 1143
ROSS: 1 Black Death 9 Erosion 10 Regal 11 Skip Conserve 14 B-movie 15 Crocus 18 Off-stage 20 Tito Stain 23 Edifice 24 Merseyside
WN: 2 Lair 3 Condor 4 Derisory 5 Anger 6 Halley's net 7 Peaseblossom 8 Domino 13 Pittance 16 Critic Egress 19 Flair 21 Wind

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S CROSSWORDS: Books 10,11,12,13 £4.50 each. The Times Concise - Book 2 (240 puzzles) £5.99, Times Two - Book 6 £3.50, The Times Jumbo (Cryptic) - Book 1 £5.99. IONARIES: Collins £25, Chambers - £25 (both on IBM CD-ROM £29.99), Synonyms and ms £7.99, Crossword Solvers' £11.95, Roget's Thesaurus £6.99 (Pb) £14.99(Hb), Difficult Words, English Idioms £6.99, Literary Terms £12, Astronomy £10.99, ALSO Crossword Manual £10.99, ord Compiler £13.99, Grammar and Usage £13.99.

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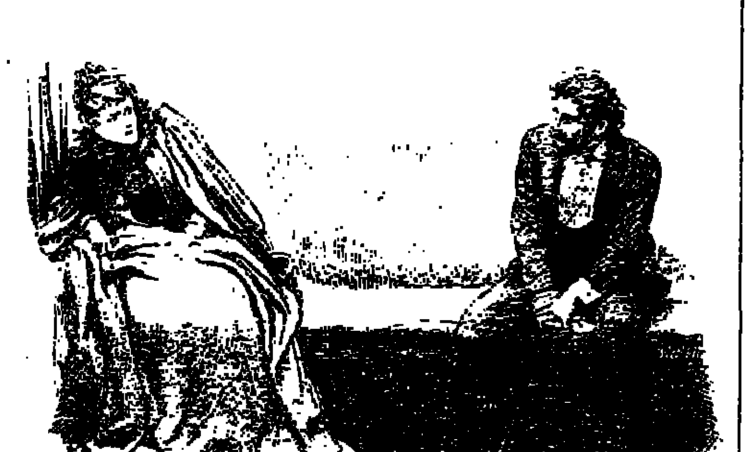
PUNCHLINE

READERS are invited to write an amusing caption for the cartoon (right), from *The Strand Magazine* (reproduced from Westminster Libraries, Sherlock Holmes Collection, Marylebone Library).

The cartoon will be printed again next week with a caption from those submitted.

Send caption suggestions on a postcard with your name and address to: Strand Caption 60, Weekend, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN.

The Editor's decision is final. The closing date for entries is Wednesday, July 16.



"So, Mrs Hamilton, your only experience is collecting envelopes?"

The winning caption for last week's cartoon (above) was submitted by J. Dunger, Stevenage, Hertfordshire

WORD WATCHING

By Philip Howard

PAK PAI
a. A taxi
b. Martial art
c. Microchip

PIPERADE
a. French military manoeuvre
b. Small tobacco-pipe
c. Basque omelette

RACKENSAK
a. Indian word-game
b. Native of Arkansas
c. Nineteenth-century firearm

OCOTILLO
a. Spanish nobleman
b. Eighth heir to an inheritance
c. A spiny shrub

Answers on page 17

BRIDGE

by Robert Sheehan

THE Cavendish tournament is the most famous money event in the bridge calendar. For the past 20 years it has been held in New York every May. This year it moved to Las Vegas, as the prize money had become so significant that the organisers were running the risk of falling foul of the New York gambling laws. Before the start, each pair is put up for auction. The successful purchaser then owns the pair (although the pair has the right to buy back a share). The money raised goes into a pool which, at the end of the tournament, goes to the owners of the leading pairs.

This year the total auction pool for the 60 pairs was $1.3 million (£765,000): the owner of the winning pair collected about $350,000. The most expensive pair, at $64,000, were the Italians Lauria and Versace, winners of this year's Macallan International Pairs and members of the Italian team victorious in the 1995 and 1997 European championship. Closely following them were Zia Mahmood and Michael Rosenberg, winners of the US team trials, on $63,000. Helgemo, the world individual champion, and Helness fetched $62,500; they were in the Norwegian team that was third in the 1997 European championship. All three pairs will be playing in the next Bermuda Bowl (the world championship). As you can see, the Cavendish draws a top-class field.

The eventual winners, Harry Tudor and Michael Seamon, had bought more than half of themselves at a cost of $15,000; it made for a pretty good investment. Here they are in action (see the hand at the top of the next column).

Dealer South Game all IMPs

North:
♠ —
♥ A 7 6 4 2
♦ K 5
♣ Q 8 6 5 3 2

West:
♠ K 8 4
♥ 10 9 8 3
♦ Q J 8
♣ K 10 4

East:
♠ J 10 9 7 3
♥ Q J 5
♦ 7 4
♣ J 9 7

South:
♠ A Q 6 5 2
♥ K
♦ A 10 9 6 3 2
♣ A

Contract: Six Diamonds by South
Lead: four of clubs

This board was an indication of how the wind was going to blow for Tudor and Seamon (and it certainly needs to be blowing in your favour to win a 60-pair event). The game looks comfortable enough for North-South, particularly Three No-trumps by South, and the fortunate position in spades means that if you reach Five Diamonds you can survive even on a trump lead, since you can drop the king of spades in three rounds.

Seamon and Tudor were more ambitious: they reached Six Diamonds. They were lucky enough to get a club lead (a heart removes a vital entry). Can you spot the best chance?

It is to play for the clubs to be 3-3. Take the ace of clubs, ruff a spade, and ruff a club, then play a trump to dummy, and ruff another club. Play ace and another trump, and finally overtake the king of hearts with the ace to cash dummy's winning clubs. Your twelve tricks are two black aces, a spade ruff, one heart, five diamonds, and the three long clubs.

COMPUTER GAMES AND PASTIMES

by Tim Wapshott

Direct Connection

Twelve readers can win a free Direct Connection Internet account for a year

"AND WHAT about the Internet?" asked the perplexed customer of the Dixons salesman. "Do I need to buy one of those, too?" Confusion about the Internet, e-mail addresses, home pages and the like abounds, but in truth there is not much to know. Read on and you could win, if not the Internet itself, then the next best thing.

The Internet is not something you buy. It is out there somewhere, a massive bunch of intangible computer links in cyberspace limbo. It never closes. Nor does it need dusting once a week by men in boiler suits. It just *is*, fuelled and maintained by the many global computer systems linked into it.

To get onto the Internet, first you need a computer (like a Mac or a PC running Windows 3.1 or Win95) and a modem (the faster speed the better). Most home computers are connected via an Internet Service Provider (called an ISP), such as Compuserve or Direct Connection, which provides the necessary software to load onto your machine. Then, to access the Internet, you merely dial up a special access number via your telephone line and modem.

Once online, think of the Internet as a massive electronic book with an equally massive index. Enter any keyword into the search engine and it will throw up exhaustive lists of links, Web site addresses which, once clicked on, whisk you directly to them.

It is these sites which can be compelling, everything from the equivalent of an electronic leaflet with a few pages of text and pictures, to more imaginative interactive zones which come alive with moving images and sound clips. The best way to explore is to stroll around for yourself. If the computer becomes inactive for too long, just click on the "home page" to get back to the beginning. You can also reach a site by typing in its specific address, the sort of line you'll find printed in newspaper stories or at the end of television programmes.

In addition to roaming the Internet, your ISP account also lets you send and receive private e-mail. E-mail is like being able to send or receive a fax, except other files can be added, such as pictures. Your ISP will provide you with an e-mail address, along the lines of fbloggs@dircon.co.uk. Outgoing messages are sent when you are ready, incoming mail is received and held for collection.

That's really all you need to know to get going. Apart from the cost of an ISP account, the other expense is the cost of the local telephone call while you are online. The whole world is plugged in for the cost of a local call, which in some countries luckier than Britain also happens to be free. But there are still ways to keep the online costs down. You can limit your calls to BT's weekend rate of less than a penny a minute from midnight on Friday to midnight on Sunday, and include the service number in your Friends & Families listing to shave a further 10 per cent off costs.

Floppy discs offering free trial periods with ISPs are widespread. On the matter of security, you will find that the Internet opens up a wide range of credit card purchasing, from ordering online magazine cuttings to buying CDs. But I am not convinced about the absolute security of the Internet so, instead, only make orders using a credit card with a very low limit.

Cyberspace Thirty-Three offers a free Direct Connection account for a year to 12 readers. Not only will the winners get online with an e-mail address, the membership also allows you to make your own stylish splash on the Internet by authoring, or "publishing", your own site for others to visit. Direct Connection's team will provide full hands-on support to help you design and put together your site. A full year's subscription to Direct Connection, which includes backup for would-be home page publishers, ordinarily costs £170.

The competition is open to all, although a basic understanding of the Internet is important. You can enter as an individual or a group seeking to run a joint effort. Explain in 150 words why your Web site would be head and shoulders above the rest. It should serve some kind of useful purpose, if only to amuse. Should you win, it is hoped that you will endeavour to turn your Internet dreams into cyberspace reality.

Send you entry, together with your name, address and home telephone number, to: Cyberspace Thirty-Three, Computer Games and Pastimes, Weekend, *The Times*, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. The closing date is Tuesday, July 29. Normal *Times* competition rules apply and the judges will not enter into any additional correspondence.

This week's Top Tip comes from Jean Grzesik of Sheffield: "Save Internet costs by sending inane messages to people selected at random from the telephone directory."

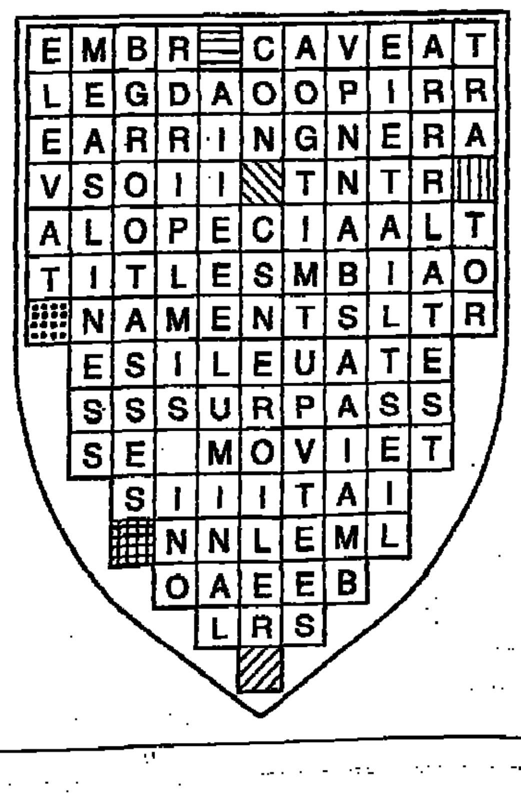
THE LISTENER CROSSWORD

No 3418: Splaash by Kea

ABOVE THE LINE, answers never abut: answers in the same row or column overlap, or there is a gap between them. Below the line, answers reading across may drift gently up and down. The overall arrangement of answers is symmetrical about a central vertical axis. Clues are given in normal order of appearance of the answers' starting points in the diagram, ie, left to right, top to bottom. Solvers need not add any bars or numbers, but should shade the unclued answer that is the puzzle's subject. All clued answers can be verified *somewhere* in Chambers (1993), except for the penultimate one (which is in Collins).

ACROSS
Ban it as unorthodox? I'm entitled to Muslims' toleration
Any woman that's no end of show off?
Mountain nymph almost rejected an element for air
Lo, ——'s foul nasal ooze
Careworn, every second's taken an eternity
Likely to flourish at top (2 words)
Listing 50 breaches in Congress
Question followed scriptures
There's *no* hint of sanction to smash USA's source of butter
King's Counsel dressing in mini of black silk
Ragged blouse — showing false parts
Handle current around Italy?
Superior swimmer is caught by packing company
Yaws, knocking over a dock
Mum has left mint on meal
The king secures such victory in retreat
It gets Arabs water, liquor and what?
Will's likely to bring suits on tick again, roughly about time
Final sale's ending after 1 Jan
In it, *hoc loco*, Latin *must* have been read
Edible seaweed, tangle's covering rock

DOWN
Muslim way of escaping conjugality: endless narration on water?
Pukes up violently, having stomach upset?
"Ultimate in excellence in the trade" award discontinued
Be hot, endlessly holding pole, as palace guard
Flowing script, last edited when governor's around
So far, I'm inconclusively seen
Couch-potato mulls, twiddling with his extremities
Nancy gets opposing player to cut table-talk
Raised outside of Otaki in New Zealand — that's a heavenly place
Love, Latin American love, right?
Cat that's wild a long time, year in, year out
Seizure cramping a person up
Playing hob, a crone, I cling to broom
Shut up last of neat among wild ox, yaks (2 words)
Having one around music and drama school, you should write on cue
Hope pay works out around grand (to start with), rounding at top or bottom of column
Name introduced to cause renewed interest in Shakespeare
Heartlessly intrusive, crashing? Not with this
Beak is sent up around Northern detention centre (2 words)
Seminal passage from mediocre anthology
With us you must play by bridge contracts — North's revoked
Force's showing round detective in hearing
System of bidding for contracts makes one pass
Lady's fingers circle heaving chest



E M B R ▤ C A V E A T
L E G D A O O P I R R
E A R R I N G N E R A
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A L O P E C I A A L T
T I T L E S M B I A O
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E S I L E U A T E
S S S U R P A S S
S E M O V I E T
S I I I T A I
▦ N N L E M L
O A E E B
L R S
▨

Solution to No 3415:
Coat of Arms by Peeper

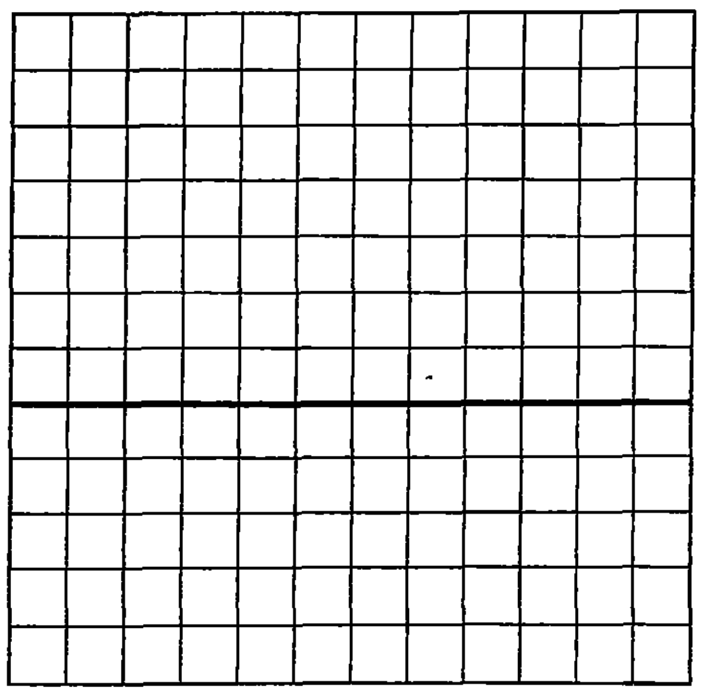
Motto: BETTER'N ANY OTHER FROG

From: *The Celebrated Jumping Frog* by Mark Twain

Method of shortening some answers: the colours AZURE, VERT, GULES, OR, ARGENT, SABLE and PURPURE are shaded in, respectively, as: HORIZONTAL LINES, LINES FROM DEXTER CHIEF TO SINISTER BASE, PERPENDICULAR LINES, DOTS, PLAIN FIELD, CROSS LINES HORIZONTAL AND PERPENDICULAR and LINES FROM SINISTER CHIEF TO DEXTER BASE. (Not all of these are given in Chambers.)

Solvers were also permitted to colour their solutions appropriately.

The winner is K. McAndrews, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.
The five runners-up are T. Allison, Derby; B. Jackson, Southampton; A. McBride, Edinburgh; J. Macintosh, West Wickham, Kent; R. Ogden, Bolton, Lancs.



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THE TIMES

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ANNE would love to meet a man up to 70, 5'10-6'0" who would join forces and spend time in England/Capetown. Anne has a house there. He must be well spoken, privately educated, professional background, golf, bridge, gardening interests a bonus. Anne is elegant, attractive, gregarious, slim, blue eyes, long legs. She has lead a varied and interesting life. If you fulfill the above criteria, then please contact Mrs Heber Percy, Country Partners on her pager 01523 523 623 and ask for pager 861501 leaving your name, tel no or fax 01432 370381. No charge for putting you in touch. All calls returned within 48 hours. Complete confidentiality

ARE you aged 40-60 living in Bath, Bristol, Exeter, Swindon, Glos, Somerset or S. Wales? Are you seeking that 'special lady'? Look no further, let us help you meet her. Individual selective introductions. Please contact Perfect Partners of Bath tel 01225 482080

ARTICULATE, lively minded Shrewsbury woman, 40s seeks educated man of wit & imagination, N/S to share life's civilised pleasures. Box No 6235 ✍

ARTISTIC, stylish, slim, intelligent, attractive, N/S solvent lady NW London;interests varied, travel (Italy), etc. seeks similar charming tallish man (55-70). Photo/tel no. please. Reply to Box 6295 ✍

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THE TIMES
cannot guarantee that respondents will receive a reply when answering advertisements on this page, although we hope that as a matter of courtesy they will. When making contact with people for the first time it is advisable to meet in a public place and let a member of your family or a trusted friend know where you will be. We would advise readers and advertisers to exercise caution when giving out personal details. This will be respected by genuine respondents.

LADIES

COMPANION, lover, friend: Late forties lady, reformed workaholic, seeks retired/semi retired male to share love for music, books, ideas, travel & each other. Kent/London/ anywhere. Photo/phone no appreciated. Reply to Box No 6244 ✍

BEAUTIFUL music, colour, light - share these with this slim, smiling, sensitive & sparky woman who is looking for a N/S, tall man 48-58. London/Surrey. Box No 6308 ☎ ✍

CREATIVE, articulate professional, 40's, tall, slim, attractive Sussex based mother WLTM sensitive, sincere, solvent N/S man (brave too), 45-55 for long term relationship. Photo please. Box No 6272 ✍

EASY-GOING, attractive, fun loving, slim prof business lady, recently widowed, no ties, financially independent, well travelled. Enjoys skiing, golf, & the occasional race meeting. Seeks considerate, caring gentleman (50+) with good conversation, well educated & socially confident. Mids/London. Please Reply with photo to Box 6224 ✍

ESHER Kingston and surrounding areas (KT postcode), alone and rather not be? One local phone call could put you in touch with the person you are seeking. Elite Introductions call now 0181 547 2577

EX PAT, Dynamic, slender, pretty brunette 5'7". Enjoys the arts, tennis, bridge, skiing. Loves country, mountains and seashore walks, dogs, cities. WLTM single, cultured, cosmopolitan, caring gentleman 50-65, VGSOH for lasting quality friendship. Please reply with recent photo to Box No 5952

SATURDAY RENDEZVOUS

GENTLE, lovely, slim blonde professional graduate, 29, WLTM tallish N/S professional man to share the good things in life, music, art, theatre, travel, etc. Photo appreciated. Cambridge area. Reply Box No 6237 ✍

IF you deserve the best, if you don't believe in "buying cheap" call The Executive Club of St. James's 07000 499 8833

JUST out there again - this bright, slim, 5'6", pretty brunette, sociable, 43, GSOH, 13 yr old son, Cambs area seeks kindly, friendly, cheerful & solvent man for walking, talking & laughing. Please Reply with photo to Box No 6302 ✍

LONG-HAUL stewardess, 37, strawberry blonde seeks prof. man to make her life complete. Sussex based. Box No 6273 ✍

PRETTY, Anglo-Italian professional seeks affectionate, tall, sensitive, N/S professional 28-35, similar background, interested Arts, other cultures for friendship, hopefully more. Photo. London. Box No 6267 ☎ ✍

PRETTY, slim, prof South American lady 50's, Berks. based WLTM compatible, considerate, gregarious man. Reply with photo to Box No 6261 ☎ ✍

RICHMOND to Runnymede, Kew to Denham (all TW/UB postcodes) seeking that special person? let us help. Call Linda at Elite 0181 580 0028: 7 days

SEARCHING for that elusive East/West combination? An attractive single woman of intelligence, GSOH, charm & modesty! This Indian professional lady enjoys life to the full, from sports, books, restaurants, log fires, travel to Personal Development & more! WLTM her counterpart, any nationality, between 38-45 years. London based. Photo & letter essential. Box No 6268 ✍

SNOWDONIA tall, slim, young/minded fair-haired professional (46). High mountains, wild beaches, arts, gardens, loves life. Seeks interesting active solvent N/S guy (up to 52) for laughter & happy times. Photo plse. Box 6266 ☎ ✍

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LONDON AND NATIONWIDE

SUCCESSFUL legal lady tall, 40s, no ties with varied interests not especially sporty seeks similar prof male, GSOH, for friendship/relationship. Write with photo to Box No 6251 ✍

SUSSEX based fun-loving brunette, likes to be by the sea, enthusiastic gardener seeks special man 50-60 to share good times & sunsets. Please reply with photo to Box 6265 ☎ ✍

TALL attractive professional, but is he honest, unmarried, ready to settle & sincere? We screen out all new members before you meet them. E.C.

TWO prof girls (30something), tall & slim, central London, enjoy cinema, wining, dining, travel, sport, etc. WLTM financially solvent guys for friendship/fun & laughter. No boring bankers. Photo appreciated. Reply Box No 6271 ✍

WIDOW 50's, very fit, slim, 5'5". N/S. Enjoys tennis, walking, travel, theatre, boating, caravanning & much more. Willing to meet man of similar age & interests. SouthEast area. Photo please. Box No 6290 ✍

WONDERFUL woman going to waste! Very attractive, 5'7", romantic, wicked SOH, 34, enjoys travel, sailing, riding, countryside, friends, hoping to meet that elusive man who is tall, attractive, successful, sincere, fun and romantic. 30s/40s. Do you exist? London. Please reply with photo to Box No 6276 ✍

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GENTLEMEN

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SATURDAY RENDEZVOUS

GENTLEMEN

AARD seeks Vark. Incomplete but solvent single parent, 40's, N/S, gregarious recluse, neat & untidy, tongue-tied wit, slothfully energetic, indoor & outdoor interests, nature, culture & sport. WLTM Princess Vark 30ish to 40ish with enough similarities to make match & enough differences to add the spice. London/Essex & anywhere. Photo. Box No 6205 ✍

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BUSY lifestyle, successful Oxbridge graduate (58), no ties, active and energetic, reforming workaholic, interests include classical music, travel, theatre, arts, socialising, gardening, sport, keeping fit seeks articulate, intelligent, professional/ academic woman, for caring relationship, marriage if compatible, ideally will to consider starting or extending a family. London area. Photo appreciated and returned. Please Reply to Box No 6283 ✍

CHOOSY? So are we. The UK's top unattached join The Executive Club of St James's

EDUCATED, slim, lady sought by professional W Mids based male, 37 to share cultural evenings & days out together. Photo please. Box No 6254 ☎ ✍

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COMPELLING future beckons! Youthful fair slim attractive professional man 50+, widely travelled, good natured, wry humour, likes people/children, sports, music, entertaining WLTM lovely slim tactile humorous positive lady 40+ to cherish for a loving lifelong adventure. Herts/London etc. Reply to Box No 6250 ✍

GENUINE fellow, fit, active, solvent, widely interested WLTM honest, open, attractive younger lady for good times together. Have time, will travel. Sussex, anywhere. Photo possible? Reply to Box No 6298 ✍

HANDSOME, tactile, slim, 6 ft. tall, N/S, middle-aged gentleman WLTM buxom lady with any accent/age who needs communication, love, world travel, adventure & fun. Home Counties/anywhere. Photo please. Box No 6259 ✍

INTERESTING, well-travelled, fit, sporty (cycling, water sports etc) attractive, 6 ft. male (38) GSOH, successful, eclectic tastes (including black/white old films, collecting books) WLTM stimulating fit female 30-40. London/ Home Counties. Photo. Reply to Box No 6300 ☎ ✍

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KNIGHT in rusting armour, 36, caring, successful, seeks intelligent, slim fun loving female. Photo appreciated. London/ South East Reply Box 6230 ☎ ✍

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LONDON based N/S, N/O Jewish gentleman with no strong views on religion or politics, very actively involved in various interests in both sport & the arts WLTM an attractive interesting lady in her 40's, 5'6" or under, N/S. Please Reply with phone no. & recent photo (essential) to Box No 6222 ✍

MISSION impossible or is it? I've been given the task of finding a very special someone for a charming friend who is 51, divorced, no children. Romantic, highly intelligent, humorous & sincere. Enjoys a fine life style, diverse interests, homes in London, country & abroad. Light smoker (his only major fault). Overall a very desirable character (honestly!) If you are between 33-38ish, attractive, nationality unimportant, intelligent, well read & already established on the ladder of life, preferably no children but would like some, please respond with recent photo/ telephone no. to Box No 6233 ✍

PROFESSIONAL Derby male 38 WLTM professional Derby female of similar age. Interests - skiing, outdoors, theatre, eating out and country pubs. For friendship & possible long term relationship. Reply Box 6223 ☎ ✍

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SATURDAY RENDEZVOUS

SEA captain, 54, single, tall, handsome, planning exploration canals of Britain & Europe on own classic narrow boat, ex more Force 10. Seeks very fine fine partner to share laughs & man the pumps. Photo to Box No 6219 ✍

SENSITIVE Upper Class 20s/30s, n/s, who would normally reply sought by eligible, tall Oxbridge widower. Wife sadly died aged 34, daughter 15. Old enough to be your father but full of go. Large house, Kent village. Distance unimportant. Total love, luxury. Everybody would approve. Nobody need know how we met. Box No 6286 ☎ ✍

SOCIABLE 33yr old divorced business professional, dark haired/eyes, WLTM a career minded, intelligent professional, curvy (25-35) for fun times. Wilts/M 4 corridor. Photo please to Box No 6226 ☎ ✍

SOUTHAMPTON You are a bright lady, 40ish, want conversation, company, companionship. I am 47, computer consultant. Share my evenings hopeful more. Box No 5628 ✍

STARTING again, Male, aged 37, likes music, theatre, sports, seeks sparky lady aged 26-36 for intimate dinners, live music and daft behaviour. London/ Surrey/Kent. Box No 6242 ✍

SUCCESSFUL, Handsome, single, solvent international businessman (M.D). mid fifties, 6'2", sensual, masculine and passionate wants sensitive, free-spirit, freedom loving professional lady 48-60 with intellectual and artistic tastes. You are extra curvy, good looking, stylish and exuding humour, warmth and passion. Meeting in Paris? Photo essential please. Reply Box No 6226 ✍

SUFFOLK based 60 yr young, 6'1", country loving gentleman with all the right qualities. Oxford degree, own successful business. Seeks happy lifestyle with warm & attractive lady. Please let me send you photos & details. Reply to Box No 6277 ✍

SUNDAY TIMES, better times, shared times, time for The Executive Club yet? E.C.

TALL, athletic, successful businessman, forties, SW1 based looking to care for, amuse & enjoy life with a special lady who has a great figure & smile to match. Photo appreciated. Please Reply to Box No 6000 ✍

TALL, good looking, successful, masculine male, 40. Witty, worldly, sporty, romantic, sincere, very virile. WLTM attractive, curvy, warm, interesting feminine female, 28-45, with class, curves, charisma. Photo essential. London/SE. Please Reply to Box No 6304 ✍

TALL, handsome, successful, brainy Hunk seeks Princess, 20-30, very attractive, intelligent who wants to share the good life. Photo please. Reply to Box 6176 ✍

WARM-HEARTED, sensitive, quick witted, optimistic, easy going gentleman (37), 5'7", N/S, GSOH. Interested in music, sports, food (I enjoy cooking) & classic cars. WLTM slim, warm lady (25-38) to wine & dine. London/Home Counties. Please Reply with photo to Box 6240 ☎ ✍

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THE TIMES
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EXECUTIVE club PARTIES FOR JULY

LONDON EVENTS

Dinner at the race track E4
Dinner Spanish Theme N1
Cocktail party – W1
Lunch NW1
Cocktail party – W1
Concert at Kenwood House
Summer Party Regents Park
Cocktail party W1
Buffet dance under 35's
Cocktail Party Knightsbridge
Cocktail party at top hotel SW1
Dinner/dance Kensington
Dinner Party THE top Indian restaurant
Cocktail Party W1 restaurants
A 'jolly' to Paris by Eurostar

EVENTS OUT OF LONDON

Party night Northampton
Dinner dance top hotel Coventry
Dinner Dance Market Harborough
Karaoke night Northampton
Dinner/dance Tamworth
Summer boating & picnic at Stratford upon Avon
Shirley Bassey in concert – Althorp House
Paintball fight Coventry
Barbecue/dance hotel at Cheshire
Independence Day BBQ Bolton
Summer Ball (Black Tie) Harrogate
Under 45's Indian evening Chester
"Gastronomic Dinner" party Cheshire
Wild West Night Co. Durham
Sunday Lunch North Wales
Cocktail Party North Wales
Chester Races & dinner at French Bistro
Glide & Dine!! Derby
Music by Moonlight! Open air concert at Fountains Abbey Yorks
Masked Ball Leicester
Discovery Evening Lancs
Dinner Cheshire under 45's
Caribbean Night Lancs
Dinner Glos
Dinner party Chester
Dinner party Lake District
Dinner dance/Cabaret Cheshire
Open air concert at York featuring 60's music groups
Dinner party country house Tyne & Wear

DINNER/DANCE KENSINGTON
Join us at a well-known Italian restaurant in Kensington for an evening of fun, spent in the company of other unattached professionals for dinner and dancing throughout the night.

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A celebrity day at the races. Join our summer party at Sandown Park. Cocktail reception, 3 course lunch and afternoon tea, spent in the company of many sporting celebrities.

NIGHTCLUB UNDER 35'S
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SUMMER BALL, CHESTER
Join us for our Summer Ball at Cotons – a fine country hotel set in the heart of the Cheshire countryside. This has to be worth travelling to as we have negotiated an exclusive price of only £70 to include the Ball and accommodation or £35 just for the Ball, which includes aperitifs, a full course dinner with wine and dancing until 2am.

HOLIDAYS

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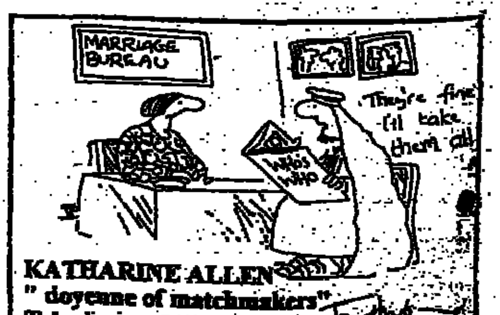

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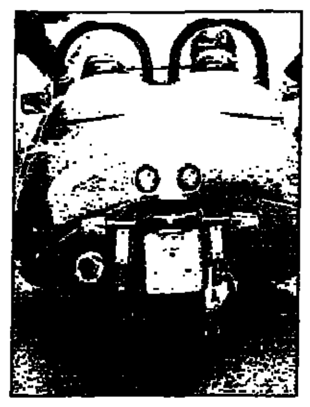
THE TIMES

CAR 97

Car with a sting faces a test in traffic

Page 8



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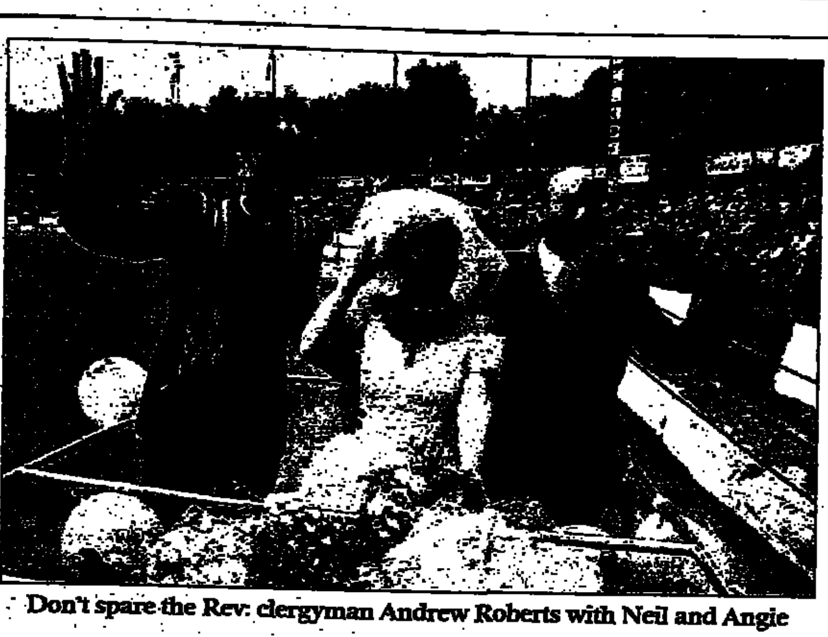


Don't spare the Rev: clergyman Andrew Roberts with Neil and Angie

Bride and vroom at the hot rod wedding

Race fans roared as cupid took pole position: **Ruth Gledhill** on a high-octane romance

For the 12,000 fans who turned out for the 1997 National Hot Rod world championship, the oval circuit became that bit more holy this week, when Neil Rowe and Angie French became "Mr and Mrs Hot Rod" on the track.

Neil, the formula chairman, and Angie, the club secretary, got off the grid of married life with a blessing from Methodist minister Andrew Roberts, the only clergyman in the National Hot Rod supporters' club.

The service at Foxhall Stadium, Ipswich, followed a civic wedding in a register office, but to the couple the race track ceremony was the "real thing".

In full bridal gown, followed by a "train" of National Hot Rods, and with Wagner's wedding march playing through the public address system, Angie, blonde and buxom, motored onto the grid in style, bedecked in ribbons and resplendent on the pace car.

They exchanged rings and pledged eternal love "for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health", before their own lap of honour in front of cheering crowds as 33 hot rods lined up for the start.

Originally inspired by American stock cars, National Hot Rod is a non-contact sport on quarter-mile ovals, with about 25 race meetings a year. There are about 100 regular racers in Britain who spend £25,000 to buy and assemble one of the custom-built Ford Fiestas, Peugeot 205s or Renault Clios, and a further £10,000 to run them for a season.

Sunday's world championship, televised by Sky, was won for a record-breaking fifth time by Northern Ireland's Ormond Christie, in his Fiesta. England's Dave Longhurst, in his Renault Clio, was second.

Each of the 75 laps takes about 14 seconds, at an average 60mph, but with maximum speeds reaching 90mph. Ramming and bumping are banned and persistent offenders heavily penalised.

Neil, 33, who owns a chauffeur-drive company, Narowe Executive Cars, is racing coordinator for the sport. Both he and Mr Roberts, minister of Kingswinford Methodist church in the West Midlands, have been watching National Hot Rod since the age of eight.

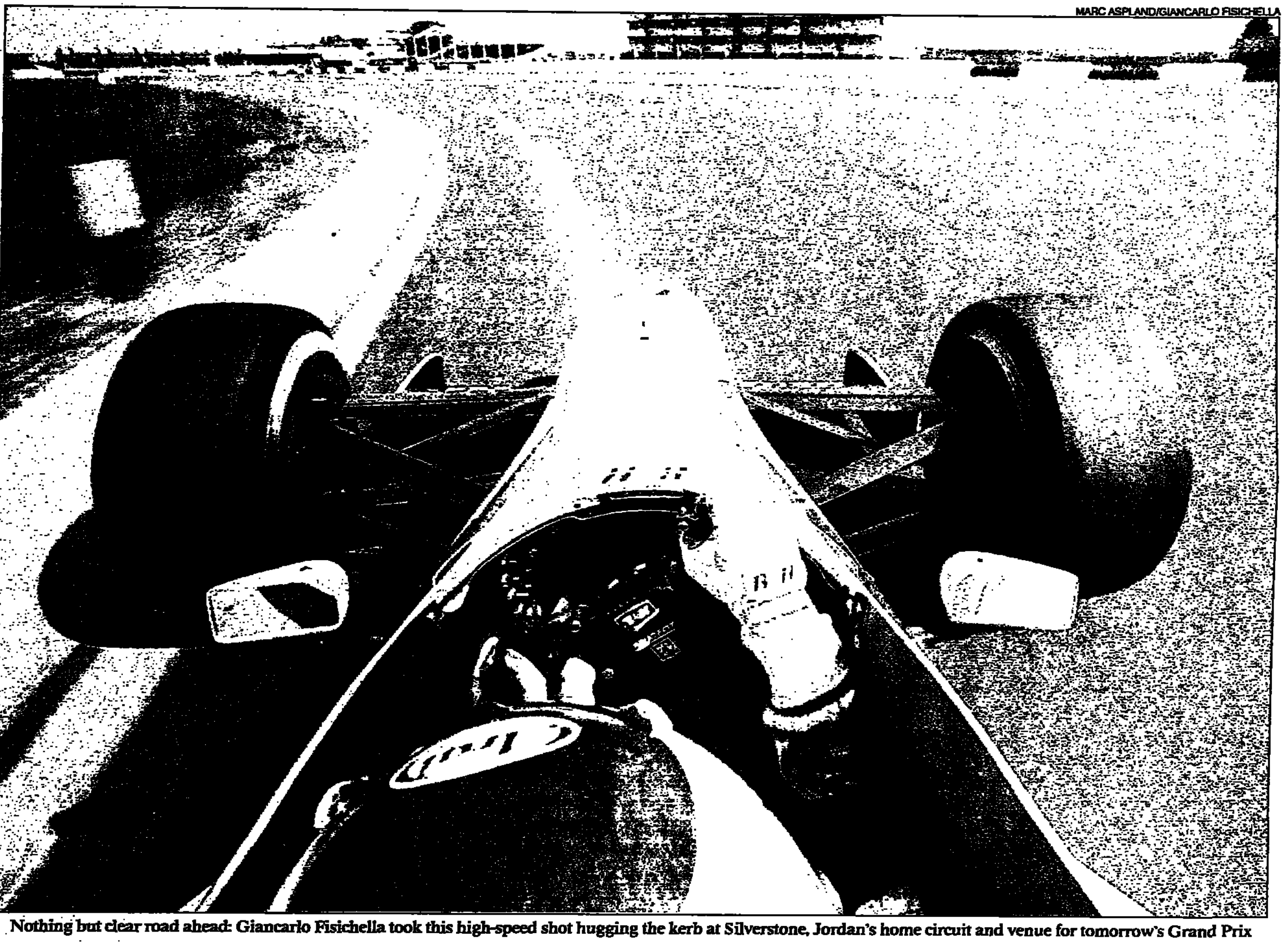
By contrast, the new Mrs Rowe was a newcomer to the sport. Employed as a temp by Neil four years ago, their eyes met across a crowded desk and it was love at first sight. And in loving him, she fell in love with his sport.

A wedding on the track during Avon Tyres and Kent Cams' "Spedeweekend" was the only way to ensure their family and many friends — drivers, mechanics and race fans — could be present, while at the same time allowing the couple to be there for the key date in the hot rod racing calendar.

Alan Copps discovers how the Silverstone home team plans to be in the winner's frame tomorrow

Jordan's eye-view of the British GP lead

MARC ASPLAND/GIANCARLO FISICHELLA



Nothing but clear road ahead: Giancarlo Fisichella took this high-speed shot hugging the kerb at Silverstone, Jordan's home circuit and venue for tomorrow's Grand Prix

This is the driver's-eye view of Silverstone: the kerb looms as Giancarlo Fisichella hurls his golden Jordan round the team's home circuit where the RAC British Grand Prix takes place tomorrow.

With the help of some clever gadgetry the Italian star pressed the button himself for this unique photograph during a practice session last week in which the Jordan team, with two of the youngest drivers on the grand prix circuit, laid down a challenge to their rivals.

Fisichella's teammate Ralf Schumacher, 22, who had already set the fastest time at Silverstone this year, proved the quickest driver in that test session, with a lap of 1 minute 22.71 seconds, matched only by Heinz-Harald Frentzen in his Williams and eight hundredths of a second faster than his elder brother and championship leader Michael in his Ferrari. Fisichella was four tenths of a second behind him.

The Jordan team have already been on the podium twice this year; Fisichella, 24, came third in Canada last month and Ralf Schumacher achieved the same result in Argentina. There is nowhere they would rather score their first grand prix victory after 105 races than at Silverstone, where their factory stands just 50 yards from the circuit.

More than any team, Jordan are confident they can spring a surprise at Silverstone. "The British Grand Prix is different to the other races, not simply because this is our home, but because of the historical connections: Eddie Jordan racing was the first team to set up here in 1980 and the British Grand Prix not only acts as a reminder of how far we have come since then, but it is a good excuse to recall those early days," says Eddie Jordan.

The team has already pulled off one surprise in this crucial week of the season by announcing they have signed a two-year deal to use the powerful Mugen-Honda engine from next year, when Peugeot, which has provided their power for the last three years, transfers its allegiance to the all-French Prost team.

Gary Anderson, Jordan's technical director, believes there is more to come: "I am quietly confident that we could pull off a surprise at Silverstone. We have had a couple of good tests here and the car is good in fast corners. The Silverstone circuit is far better than last year — it is faster and more of a driver's circuit than previously, with excellent quick sections. Giancarlo and Ralf really enjoy it.

He adds: "The surface is a little mixed, as the resurfaced areas have lots of grip and the other areas do not. Since our aerodynamic package is good, however, we do not have a problem on areas which lack grip. I'd love to win at Silverstone and I really do think the car's quick enough."

To achieve that, the Jordans with their vivid snake-emblazoned noses will have to get up into the furious battle between Michael Schumacher, and Jacques Villeneuve in the Williams. That's exactly what Ralf Schumacher did in the last grand prix in France when he qualified third on the grid, although he could only manage sixth in the race.

Eddie Jordan is a bit more reserved about his team's prospects but he is quick to point out that his young drivers are gaining rapidly in confidence and are much more familiar with Silverstone than with some of the circuits in the early part of the season. For him the team's "home" race is a family affair, with all the 125 employees, sponsors and the Supporters' Club on hand as well as the business of trying to win. "Of course this grand prix is also the closest race to Ireland, so we have a huge number of fans who come to see us. It becomes rather manic, but it is all good fun."

Despite all those pressures, the team's research and development technicians Paul Thompson and Gary North, known as "gadget", found time to help *Times* photographer Marc Aspland take the photograph above. It's exactly the sort of shot you'll be able to select from any driver in the race on your own television if the ambitious plans to float Formula One on the stock market and expand its interactive television coverage come to fruition.

But while the aerodynamic video cameras that provide the usual in-car shots slot neatly into brackets which all teams have to provide, a special carbon-fibre bracket had to be fabricated for Aspland's camera. "We were a bit worried it might get pulled off in the slipstream, but fortunately it survived," said North. Still things have come a long way since Jack Brabham had to carry the whole photographic kit on his helmet.

How we set up the equipment for our unique picture, left, and how Jack Brabham had to do it in the old days

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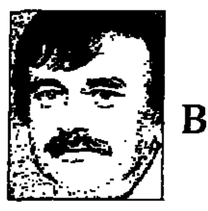
Formula One tyre changes take around seven seconds, so why does it involve an hour's frustration when mere mortals perform the same task?

Going spare over tyre changes

DRIVEN TO DISTRACTION



Peter Barnard

One of life's great mysteries will unfold at Silverstone tomorrow when ordinary motorists such as myself gaze in awe at the television and wonder why it is that what takes a Formula One team seven seconds can occupy at least an hour of my time.

Changing a wheel on a Formula One racing car can now be achieved in the blink of an eye. Indeed, the procedure is so rapid and so predictable that one wonders why on earth ITV feels the need to have a commentator in the pits, who can scarcely describe the procedure before it is over. It is like having a doctor give a commentary on a flu jab.

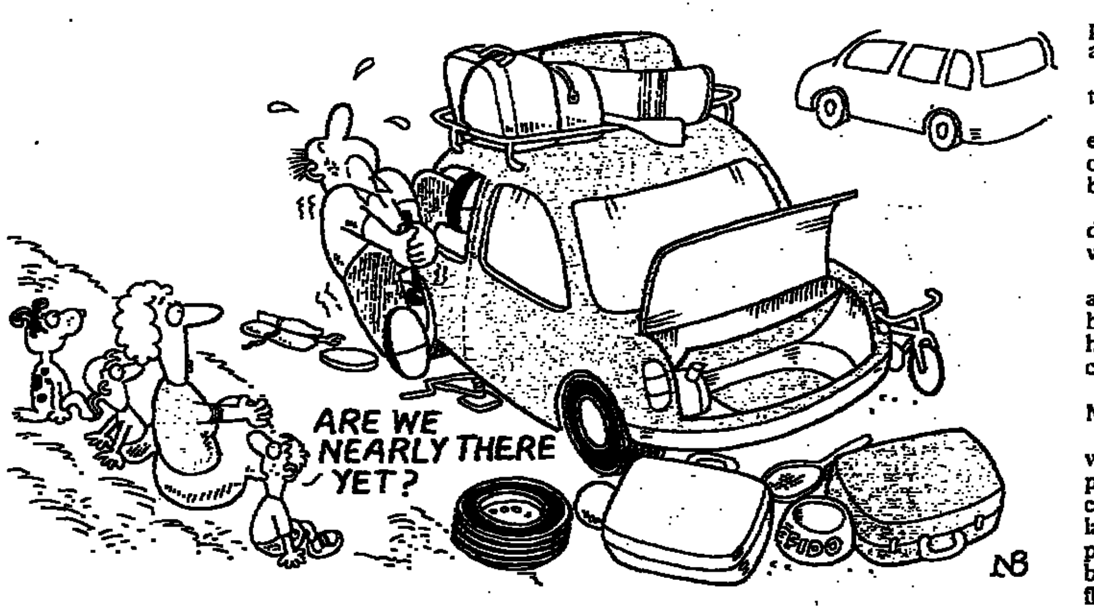
There is no greater gap in car development than that between wheel changing in motor racing and wheel changing in normal motoring. A mere mortal forced off the road by a puncture has no assistance and is quite likely to be encumbered by disadvantages not commonly encountered in a Ferrari. Indeed, the thought occurs that in the weeks between Formula One races, Murray Walker could be employed offering commentary from a helicopter as various drivers rub their chins at the sight of a flat tyre . . .

Walker: Well, they seem to be going along the A303 quite nicely, probably headed for Devon, *no they aren't*, they're in a lay-by, oh dear oh dear, that looks like a flat right front, yes, *no*, that's . . .

Martin Brundle: That's a flat left rear, Murray . . .

Walker: Absolutely right, what a shame, what a way to start a holiday. The driver's out of the car, what's he doing Martin?

Brundle: He's kicking the tyre Murray. I'm looking through the binoculars and that seems to be quite a mix of rubber, a Goodyear right front, a Bridgestone left front, something cheap and nasty right rear. I can't see the one he's punctured.


ARE WE NEARLY THERE YET?
FIDO
NB

Walker: Well, what we *can* see is a pretty interesting procedure, clock's already showing 2 mins 10 secs, and — *yes*, I thought they might — the mother, the daughter, the son and the dog are out of the car and taking the picnic table off the roof rack so clearly they're grabbing the chance to take on food . . .

Brundle: This is good thinking, the family clearly had a one-stop strategy in mind so they're making the tyre stop into a food stop as well, oh dear, I see it's the usual car boot design where the spare tyre is underneath all the luggage.

Walker: Look at that! He's put the three suitcases and the dog basket on the ground behind him so as to get at the spare but in lifting the tyre he's stepped backwards on to the dog, which had climbed into the basket, oh dear oh dear.

Brundle: I think the driver's OK Murray but the dog seems pretty angry . . .

Walker: Unbelievable! You would not credit that a dog could pick up a fully-inflated tyre let alone . . .

Brundle: Let alone bite right through the rubber, Murray.

Walker: The force of the air escaping has thrown the dog clean over the hedge and there seems to be a, is that a cow?

Brundle: Judged by its head-down running stance Murray I would say that's a bull.

Walker: My goodness it *is* a bull and it's picked up the dog on its horns and has *jumped* over the hedge and landed on the, has it, I can't quite . . .

Brundle: It's landed on the car Murray.

Walker: Well fortunately the wife and children had set up the picnic table some distance from the car, probably to avoid hearing the language that often accompanies a puncture, but now the driver has a bit more of a problem than a mere flat.

Brundle: He's got a write off, Murray.

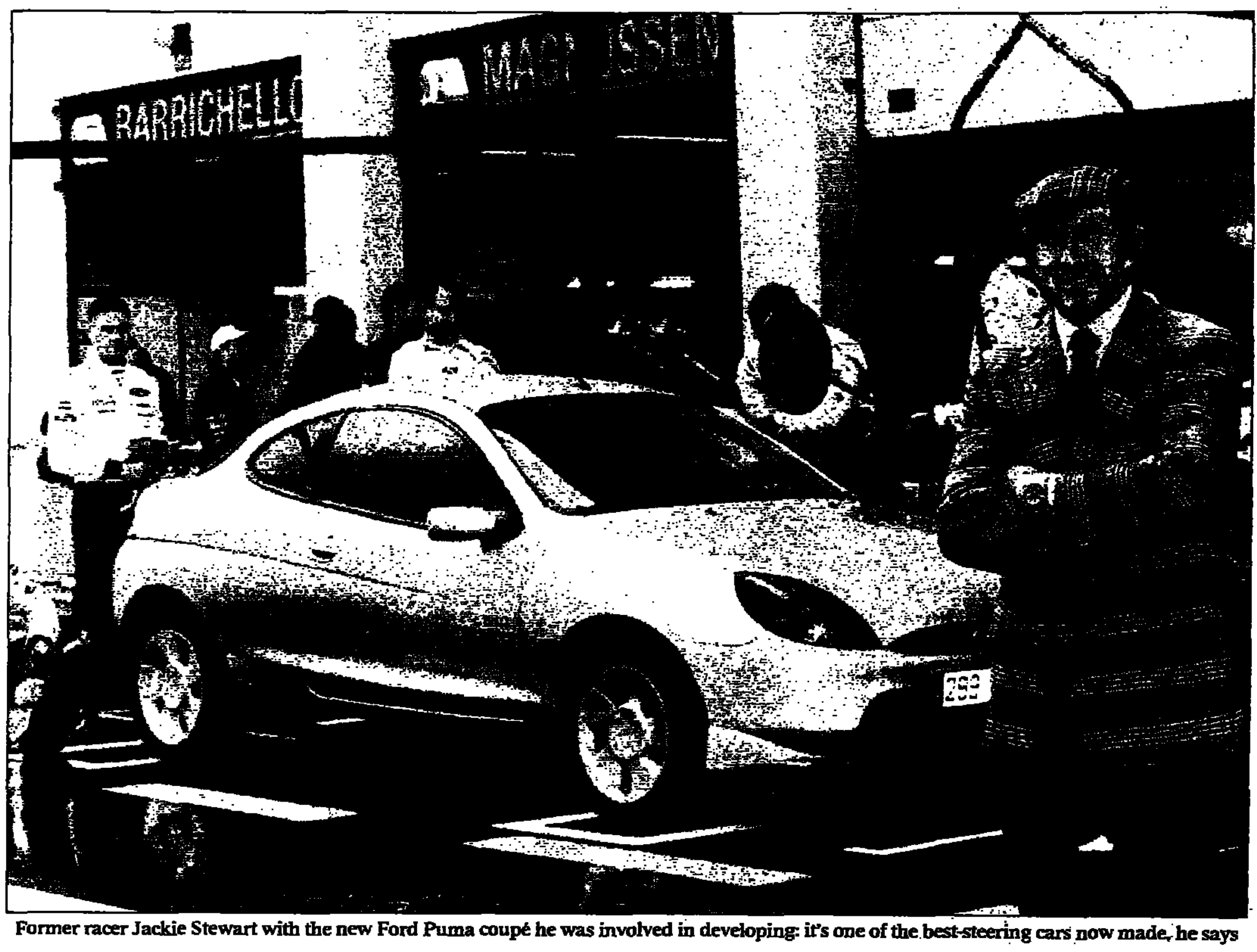
Walker: It's a sad end and although I'm the last to condone violence against animals you can understand why he's attacking the bull with the wheel brace.

Brundle: Not much else to use it for, Murray.

Walker: Unbelievable.

Links between road and racetrack are stronger than ever as carmakers seek faster results, says **Vaughan Freeman**

Engineers tweak the Stewart-Ford: improvements increasingly end up on road cars



Former racer Jackie Stewart with the new Ford Puma coupé he was involved in developing: it's one of the best-steering cars now made, he says

Why the Transit in front has Formula One parts

Diesel Ford Transits will be scarce on the grid of tomorrow's British Grand Prix at Silverstone, but the battered plumber's van that cut you up yesterday has more in common with Formula One than you think.

Similarly the blue-ovalled Puma looks cute and sporty, but its 125mph top speed is puny against the 200mph-plus monsters also powered by Ford engines. Yet, like the Transit, the Puma shares its automotive genes with its F1 relatives. Even down to its chief test driver, three-times world champion Jackie Stewart.

The modern Transit uses "drive by wire" grand prix technology which gets rid of the cable between engine and accelerator. Instead a dab on the throttle electronically tells the engine management computer how much fuel to pump into the engine.

The Puma's aluminium engine, anti-lock braking system, sleek aerodynamic shape, electronic engine management and engine computer systems, and brake-activated traction control system to prevent wheel-spin, all derive from developments on the track.

The gap is closing between grand prix and road car technology. Every year carmakers spend tens of millions of pounds on Formula One, and they want their money back. Developments trackside are finding their way on to road cars faster than ever. Electronically controlled anti-lock brakes and traction control first saw the light of day in Formula One test cars and though both are now banned by the racing authorities, have become commonplace in cars driven by millions.

Tyrone Johnson, Ford's European Motorsport Technical Director, speaking to *CAR 97* this week while at Silverstone for the Ford-powered Stewart GP team's tyre testing session, said: "In the past motorsport has been primarily a marketing gimmick, a way of making our cars sell.

"In the last 18 months we have decided to try to get more out of the motorsport deal, to get technology back that will help us in other areas.

"At the same time as Ford is helping the Stewart team. The link helps us identify new and faster ways of doing things, not just ways of improving specific components on our production cars but also ways of accelerating our entire car programmes."

Being able to design and develop new cars for customers faster is a key area, says Johnson: the competition, particularly the Japanese, can bring out a new car from scratch in two years.

"Engineers in Formula One are constantly coming up with new ideas, and all these things are considered in terms of whether or not we can adapt them on road cars."

Though active suspension is now banned in F1, it was developed by Ford during its partnership with Benetton and was introduced in limited numbers on the new Mondeo in Germany when the car was first launched.

In Formula One, the days of mechanics puzzling over a spluttering engine armed with wrenches and spanners is long gone. Instead white-overalled computer boffins just plug into the racing car's memory chip to see what is wrong. These chips, now feature on cars like the Mondeo and Ka. Dealership technicians also plug into the car's engine to see if there are any problems.

It is a two-way street. When Ford launched its current Formula One programme in 1985, its early racers adapted an electronic engine-management system then used in Ford's road cars. Thanks to the demands of racing the unit has shrunk to a third of its size and a fraction of the weight, become far more powerful and, as a new generation engine management unit, has found its way back to roadgoing cars.

Johnson says: "We are helping Stewart Grand Prix to develop a more aerodynamic car for the track, and what we learn at the same time goes back to our people to help them develop more aerodynamic road cars."

Bruce Cambern, head of Ford's worldwide race programme, says: "In Formula One every added ounce of weight saps acceleration, and every extra cubic inch of volume adds drag which slows the car.

Nearly a quarter of a century after he finished racing, the desire to succeed still drives Jackie Stewart, *writes Jonathan Crouch*. Today, however, the stakes are higher. The giant Ford corporation employs him to test efforts of its engineers and designers.

He has rigorously scrutinised the Puma, Ford's latest small sports coupé, and the former world champion is proud of the result.

He first worked with Ford on the original Mondeo, and formed an instant rapport with the company's vice president of small and medium vehicle engineering, Richard Parry-Jones, as Stewart sensed that the Welshman was someone who understood his point of view.

"My concerns are centred around the issue of driveability — the way the car communicates to its driver through the steering, the accelerator and the brakes," Stewart says. "The importance of this area of vehicle development isn't widely appreciated but Richard understands it perfectly. Whether he's driven the car or not, I feel that I can pick up the phone and say: 'Richard, I really feel strongly about this,' and know that he'll get the job done.

"Once you launch a car and once you've given it your blessing, you can't take it back — it has to be right. To achieve that, it's no good for me to be merely a critic. I need to get personally involved."

Last year he spent more than 135 days on test tracks in Europe, the United States and South America, developing the superminis, family hatchbacks and sports coupés you will be buying in this century and the next. Plus of course, a car that is already here: the new Puma.

Stewart has been driving Puma prototypes and pre-production models for the past three years, mostly at Ford's proving ground in Belgium. Though pleased with the end result, he is quick to point out that much of the groundwork had already been done.

"In the little Ford Ka, we'd already created what, in my view, is the single best steering car in the world," Stewart said. "Interesting, isn't it, that most of the good steering cars are the least expensive ones? This is a trend I think we've continued with Puma.

"When I was racing, I always wanted a car that worked with me so that I could drive consistently right on the limit. That way, I was able to repeat lap record speeds with ease and creativity.

"I've driven Pumas in various configurations with different engines in Belgium and that's a balance we've always been able to reach — and not only in terms of steering. In things like accelerator pedal modulation and progressive braking, we've used the same approach."

PARTNERSHIP AS OLD AS BRITISH ROAD RACING

RAC
British Grand Prix
Silverstone 1997

It's a case of *plus ça change* for the British Grand Prix. The official title is now the RAC British Grand Prix, thanks to sponsorship from RAC Motoring Services, which is celebrating its centenary this year, *writes Alan Copps*.

The first such race in Britain in 1926 over a pseudo-road circuit at Brooklands was known as the RAC Grand Prix. It was won by a Delage at an average speed of 71.6mph. In 1948 when Silverstone staged its first race it was called the RAC International Grand Prix and in 1950 the RAC British Grand Prix was the first event in the new World Drivers' Championship.

The revived title perpetuates a link with motorsport that has existed since the first races of any kind were held in this country. The RAC Motor Sports Association is the governing body for Britain. "We had been organising the Grand Prix for a long time but you would hardly have known," says Jonathan Ashman, director of major events and marketing for RACMSA. "If Silverstone is the producer then we are the director, the sporting authority that deals directly with the FIA, the world governing body."

RACMSA has overseen the redesign of the track, which will make this year's race faster, and provides 1,200 flag marshals, track safety officials, observers and scrutineeers and a medical team. "It's a ten-month process selecting all these people. We need the best and most experienced in the country and they all have to be chosen by January and undergo special training. They get paid expenses for lunch and so on but otherwise it's all voluntary," says Ashman.

But the RAC's involvement is not restricted to the track. There will be scores of patrols, under the control of Norman Winchester, the RAC's special events manager, on hand to help spectators. And before the 200mph Formula One cars go out on the track each day, the 27 vehicles of the RAC's Centenary Fleet, ranging from a 1912 Phelon and Moore motorcycle to a brand new orange-painted Transit will parade around the circuit.

ROUTES TO SILVERSTONE

The Formula One cars might reach 185mph at Silverstone but visitors will be lucky to do 5mph on their way to and from the grand prix, which is once again a sell-out, with crowds of 90,000 expected.

To help readers keep moving, *CAR 97* offers suggested routes to the public car parks and for centre pass holders. The organisers recommend arriving at night, when the car parks will remain open and catering will be provided. The circuit opens at 6am today and 5am on race day tomorrow.

Route for Abbey, Luffield, Woodcote, Pit Straight, Startline and Copse grandstand ticket holders and spectator areas:

■ FROM the south-west: A34, crossing M40 at junction 9 onto A41 than A421. Follow signs for public car parks and north stands. Enter at West Entrance 1.

■ FROM M1 North: leave at junction 15a, join A43. Follow signs for Silverstone and north stands; enter at North Entrance or East Entrance.

■ FROM M1 South: Leave M1 at junction 11, join A505 Dunstable, A5 Towcester and A43. Follow signs for Silverstone and north stands; enter at East Entrance.

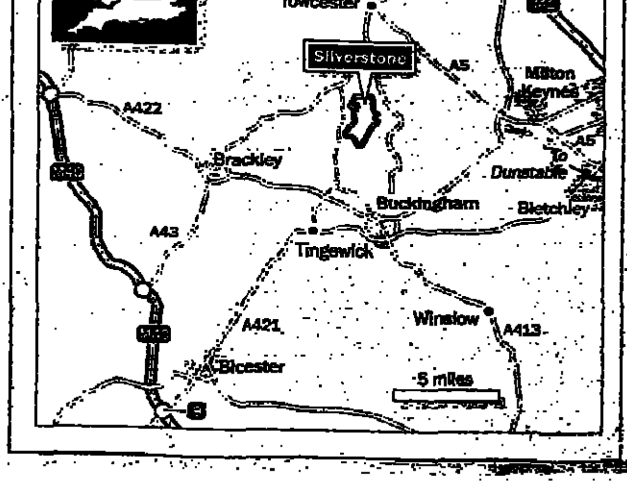
Route for Becketts, Stowe and Club grandstand ticket holders and spectator areas:

■ FROM south-west — take the A34, crossing M40 at juntion 9 on to the A41 then A421. Follow signs for public car parks and south stands; enter at West Entrance 9 or 11.

■ FROM M1 north — Leave the motorway at junction 18 and follow the A5, then the A43, south or leave at junction 15a to join the A43. Follow signs for Silverstone and south stands; enter at West Entrance 9 or 11.

■ FROM M1 south — Leave M1 at junction 11, join A505 to Dunstable, then A5 to Towcester and A43. Follow signs for Silverstone and south stands; enter at West Entrance 9 or 11.

Centre Pass holders should follow the routes above and then from the south-west follow signs for public car parks and centre passes; from the north and south, follow the signs for Silverstone and north stands, then follow signs for centre passes; enter at West Entrance 4.



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هكذا من الأصل

IN THE TYRRELL PIT – THE SECONDS WHEN THE RACE CAN BE WON OR LOST

COUNTDOWN TO THE MOST FRANTIC TEN SECONDS IN MOTORSPORT

The Tyrrell team knows the strategy of each driver – Mika Salo and Jos Verstappen – during the race and on which lap both are scheduled to stop. But that can change in minutes during the race – if it rains, or the car develops a fault. The team manager might also decide on a change depending on how well opposition cars are performing.

If a driver is being held up by a slower car, the team will bring him in early for a change of tyres and splash of fuel to avoid a needless confrontation. A clear track ahead gives the driver the chance to stay out on the circuit for a few quick laps to gain valuable time. If the safety car comes out, it is important to pit early because Tyrrell's car will be able to catch the procession behind the circuit car quickly.

1 -15 LAPS

Tyrrell's team manager tells pit crew that Jos Verstappen is getting the signal this time round, pit crew come out of the garage and get ready

2 -1 LAP

The driver goes past pits and is told by his pit board to take on tyres and fuel. At same time, the radio signals: "Box, Jos Box". He acknowledges and warns pit crew of special repairs through crash damage or faults

3 -45 SECS

Team receives countdown from the team manager

4 -30 SECS

Tyre covers are removed

5 -25 SECS

Verstappen gets call: "Box, Jos, Box" to enter pit lane

6 -7.0 SECS

Verstappen warned: "Speed limit". Driver presses the pre-programmed speed limiter before he crosses the entrance to the pit lane. To team: "Jos is in"

7 0.0 SEC

The pit signal board is turned around to show the location of the team for the driver. The driver arrives at the pits and aims to stop on the marks on the ground as shown by the team

STOPPED

8 0.8 SEC

Guns (air-hammers) are in place on wheel nuts plus front jack

9 1.4 SECS

Jacks in position and car raised

10 1.5 SECS

Fuel hose connected, red light indicates fuel is flowing

11 2.0 SECS

Brake board (lollipop) displayed to driver and wheels are off

12 3.5 SECS

New wheels on

13 4.0 SECS

Guns are removed, each wheelman raises his hand to signal all clear and jacks lowered

14 6.0 SECS

First gear board is shown, driver prepares to exit pits

15 7.0 SECS

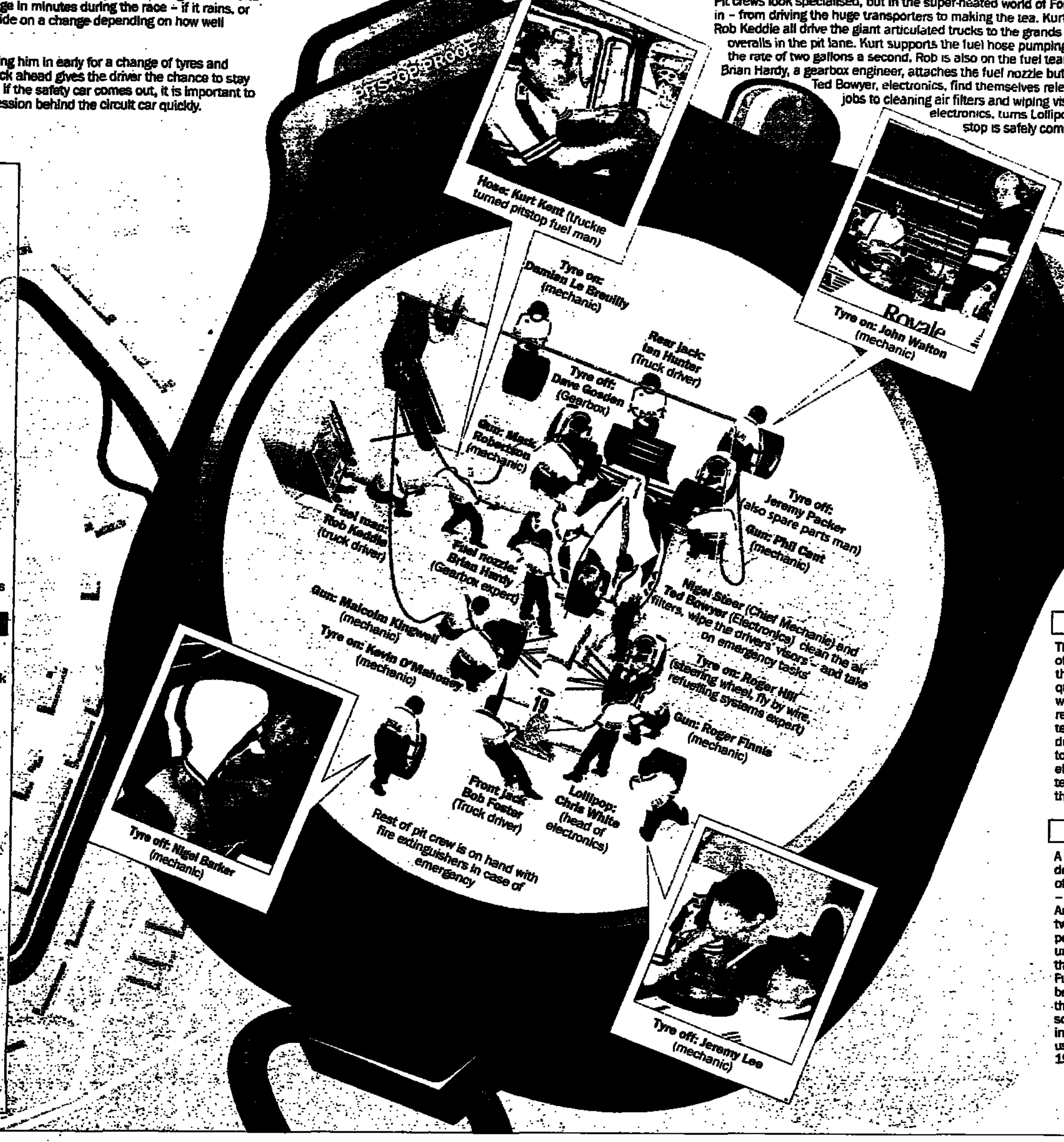
Green light comes on to confirm pre-measured quantity of fuel delivered and hose disengaged

16 7.5 SECS

Lollipop raised, car screams away still sticking to speed limit

WHO DOES WHAT IN THE PITLANE

Pit crews look specialised, but in the super-heated world of Formula One, everybody has to pitch in – from driving the huge transporters to making the tea. Kurt Kent, Bob Foster, Ian Hunter and Rob Keddie all drive the giant articulated trucks to the grands prix, then switch to fireproof overalls in the pit lane. Kurt supports the fuel hose pumping petrol into the Tyrrell F1 car at the rate of two gallons a second. Rob is also on the fuel team. Ian and Bob operate the jacks. Brian Hardy, a gearbox engineer, attaches the fuel nozzle but Nigel Steer, chief mechanic, and Ted Bowyer, electronics, find themselves relegated from top head office jobs to cleaning air filters and wiping visors. Chris White, head of electronics, turns Lollipop Man, holding the car until the pit stop is safely completed.


PITSTOP PROOF
Hose: Kurt Kent (truckie turned pitstop fuel man)
Tyre on: Damien Le Breuilly (mechanic)
Rear jack: Ian Hunter (Truck driver)
Tyre on: John Walton (mechanic)
Royale
Tyre off: Dave Gosden (Gearbox)
Gun: Mark Robertson (mechanic)
Fuel man: Rob Keddie (truck driver)
Fuel nozzle: Brian Hardy (Gearbox expert)
Tyre off: Jeremy Packer (also spare parts man)
Gun: Phil Cant (mechanic)
Nigel Steer (Chief Mechanic) and Ted Bowyer (Electronics) clean the air filters, wipe the drivers' visors – and take on emergency tasks
Gun: Malcolm Kingwell (mechanic)
Tyre on: Kevin O'Mahoney (mechanic)
Tyre on: Roger Hill (steering wheel, fly by wire, refuelling systems expert)
Gun: Roger Finnis (mechanic)
Front jack: Bob Foster (Truck driver)
Lollipop: Chris White (head of electronics)
Rest of pit crew is on hand with fire extinguishers in case of emergency
Tyre off: Nigel Barker (mechanic)
Tyre off: Jeremy Lee (mechanic)
19

TYRES

The team is entitled to nine sets of slick tyres to last throughout the whole race weekend. Before qualifying, the team must select which compound it will use for the remainder of the weekend. The team used 445 sets of tyres during 1996. Tyres are pre-heated to between 60° and 90°c by electric blankets, to get to race temperature before the car hits the circuit

FUEL

A pre-measured quantity of fuel is delivered into the car under 1.1bar of pressure at 12 litres per second – about two gallons – per second. An average fuel quantity for a two-stop strategy would be 75 litres per stop. The fuel in the dispensing unit is measured in millimetres and then converted to kilogrammes. Fuel is delivered in millimetres because it is heat-sensitive. When the temperature of fuel increases, so does it's volume, so inaccuracies develop. The team used 37,000 litres of fuel during 1996

Secrets of grand prix stars' fast-food girls

Shona Crawford Poole tries life with the stomach pitstop teams

Formula 1 drivers are kept lean and mean on the low-fat regimes of muesli and pasta decreed by their personal dieticians and fitness trainers. Snake-hipped, bull-necked, and rigorously disciplined they may be, but these fearsomely fit young men share the same cravings for comfort food as lesser mortals.

When chocolate ice-cream and brownies emerge from the kitchen of Marlboro's VIP hospitality unit after the race, it is an open secret that their destination is Michael Schumacher's mobile home. Schumacher's Ferrari team-mate, Eddie Irvine dips into the fridge for a well-chilled Twix or KitKat and has a legendary thirst for tea.

World champion Damon Hill has a secret stash of fun-size Dairy Milk bars in the Arrows kitchen, and the Brazilian Arrows driver Pedro Diniz is famous for "eating Parmesan with anything".

Their little weaknesses are no secret to the girls who cook for the teams during the grand prix season. The caterers are as essential a part of the Formula One circus as the technicians, mechanics, sponsors and team bosses. This weekend, it is the British contingent who will be on home territory.

No team is more experienced than the girls from Wings, ex-British Airways hostess Sally Hart's catering company, which has been on the road since 1981. While the drivers breakfast on fruit and meusli, the mechanics start their day with a fry-up.

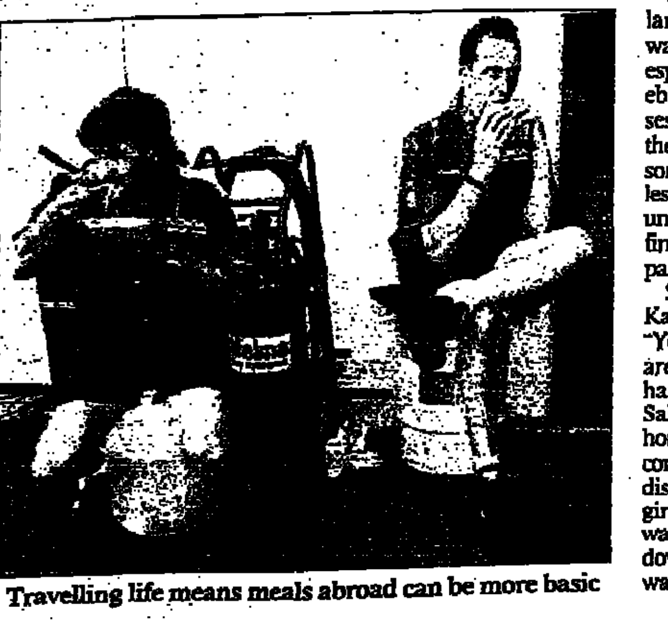
In the pits, lunch is pizzas, sandwiches and stickies, while the teams' guests eat "London restaurant-style food", says Hart, who took a chef from her Riverside Cafe in Ware out to Monaco. "It is modern food, light, fresh and delicious."

This season, Hart's girls are feeding Ferrari's guests for sponsors Marlboro, and the Arrows team and their VIPs.

Teams cater for everything from corporate hospitality to drivers' comfort snacks

"It is the hardest work you'll ever do, and the best job you'll ever have," says Kate Haberson, who runs the Ferrari operation. "The Formula 1 catering operation is as finely tuned as the cars."

The routine is well polished. Caterers arrive at the circuit on the Tuesday before race day. Their mobile kitchens and support vehicles are driven to the European circuits by crews who will double as barmen and waiters. The cooks fly in.



Travelling life means meals abroad can be more basic

"In Europe it is fine because we are totally equipped, we have ample fridges and freezers and everything in the kitchens is just so," Haberson explains. "But when we go long haul, we have field kitchens, and it is more like camping."

For the European races, the catering operation is more polished. "When we arrive at the circuit on Tuesday we have a quick clean-down of the vehicles and check where the best markets and supermarkets are. We do our menus then go out and have some dinner, see who is around."

Wednesday's big shopping expedition is followed by pastry making, cake baking, boiling stock and preparing anything else that can be done in advance.

By Thursday morning Haberson and her six-strong team are washing salads and stripping chickens. Eddie Irvine wanders in for a quiet cuppa, and first of the sponsors arrives for lunch.

The pace hots up on Friday, with people snatching meals between the practice sessions. There's a big trade in afternoon tea — even the Italians pop round for tea now.

Saturday's routine is similar. The numbers who will want breakfast, a quick espresso, lunch, tea or dinner ebb and flow with practice sessions. Sunday, race day, is the climax for drivers, sponsors and spectators. There is less pressure on the hospitality units, and before the race is finished, they are stealthily packing up.

So is it a glamorous life? Kate and Sally grin in unison. "You have to have girls who are fairly mature, who can handle the attention," says Sally. "It is like bees round a honeypot when someone new comes in. It can be quite disheartening for the other girls if suddenly the boys don't want you to take the ice-lollies down to the pits because they want the new girl to do it."

A TIMES NEWSPAPERS COMPETITION

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Tomorrow's British Grand Prix is the nineth race in our £40,000 Fantasy Formula One competition and the third of six races offering bonus points to the managers who correctly predict the first three drivers to finish. Heading our leaderboard after the French GP is L Ackland from Guildford. His team, Aston O, has 5,919 points.

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TRANSFERS You can change up to four selections before the German Grand Prix by calling 0891 555 994 (+44 990 100 394 ex UK) before noon Thursday, July 24. Your new team must have three selections from each of groups A, B, C and D. The first three drivers you select will be your prediction for the Belgian GP bonus points.

CHECK YOUR SCORE Check your score and position after the British Grand Prix on 0891 884 648 (+44 990 100 348 ex UK) with your 10-digit PIN number. Lines will open on Wednesday.

OUR LEADERBOARD AFTER THE FRENCH GRAND PRIX

POS	TEAM NAME	MANAGER NAME	POINTS
1	Aston O	L Ackland	5919
2	What Alesi Bunch!	N Rowe	5899
3	The Chequered Flags	A Cooper	5771
4	Petunia	Staszkiewicz	5763
5	Team Julius II	C Gale	5761
6	Tetch-Meisters Racing	B Day	5748
7	Dow Jones 2	I Dowty	5746
8	Waite Racing F1	P Waite	5741
9	Formula Uno	P Tabone	5732
10	Parkhurst Racing	L Danson	5723
11	Dragon Racing	R Davis	5721
12	Verna Superstars	H Coulter	5716
13	John Hunt 23	J Hunt	5713
14	Barnstoneworth 1a	I Lawrenson	5665
15	Gwilt F1	D Gwilt	5653
16	J B 1	I Rock	5623
17	John Hunt 8	J Hunt	5622
17	John Hunt 10	J Hunt	5622
19	John Hunt 29	J Hunt	5613
20	Brit F1	R Belcher	5612
20	Ben Elton	S Nicholls	5612
20	Dustscreen Racing	B Tolerton	5612
23	Bring Back Brindle	M Woodley	5601
24	Team Peter	P Thompson	5600
25	Salanco	S Dankevics	5593

MAKE 3 SELECTIONS FROM EACH OF THESE FOUR GROUPS

The first column of figures in light type after the names shows the Fantasy Formula One French GP race scores, the second column the total competition points so far

DRIVERS GROUP A

01 D Hill	116	379	07 M Hakkinen	25	670
02 M Schumacher	172	1012	08 D Coulthard	112	672
03 J Villeneuve	125	739	09 R Barrichello	40	421
04 E Irvine	140	804	10 H-H Frentzen	147	830
05 J Alesi	129	845	11 J Herbert	128	690
06 G Berger	0	653	12 M Salo	59	694

DRIVERS GROUP B

13 J Trulli*	115	865	19 G Fisichella	118	758
14 J Verstappen	14	565	20 S Nakano	12	485
15 U Katayama	123	515	21 N Fontana*	37	704
16 P Diniz	59	440	22 T Marques*	-5	490
17 R Rosset	0	0	23 J Magnussen	35	429
18 R Schumacher	124	453	24 V Sospiri	0	0

CONSTRUCTORS GROUP C			CONSTRUCTORS GROUP D		
25 Williams	25	117	31 Arrows	5	-69
26 Ferrari	30	180	32 Sauber	9	82
27 McLaren	0	87	33 Tyrrell	-20	9
28 Benetton	12	130	34 Minardi	6	32
29 Jordan	21	60	35 Stewart	-20	-59
30 Prost	7	81	36 Lola	0	0

*Rule 2 applies. Jarno Trulli of Minardi replaces Olivier Panis in the Prost team. Tarso Marques replaces Trulli at Minardi and at Sauber Norberto Fontana replaces Gianni Morbidelli, who originally replaced Nicola Larini.

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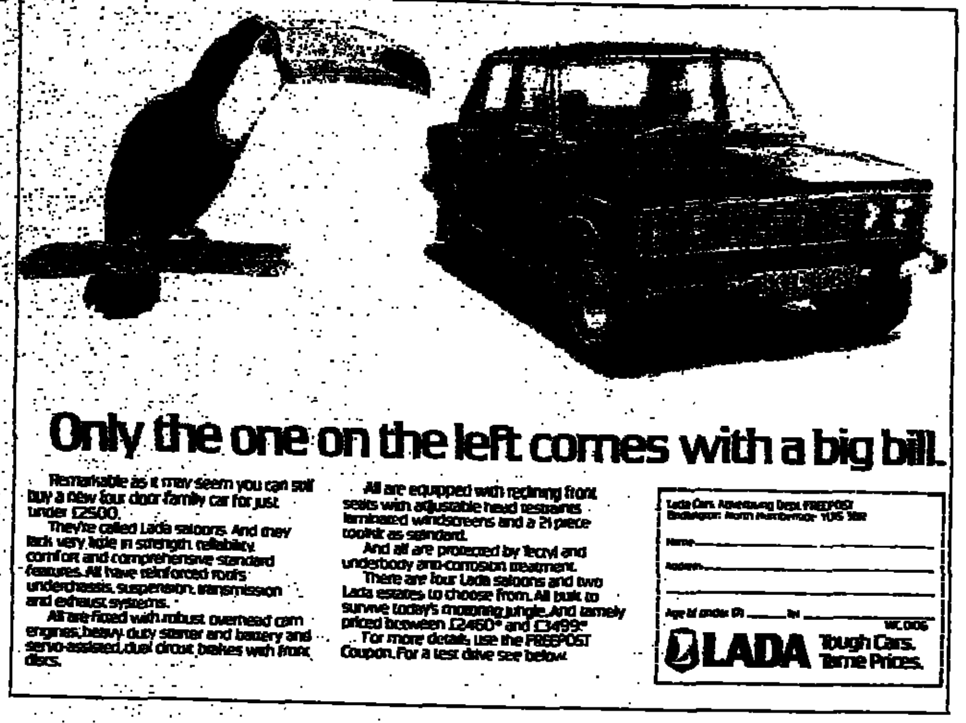

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Iron curtains for poor Lada

Clean-air rules finish off the basic box of Soviet bolts that many Brits came to love, reports **Kevin Eason**

This is no time for jokes. After 24 years, selling more than 330,000 cars, Lada has bowed out of the British market, probably for good.

The sturdy Russian cars founded their reputation on the sort of gags that would make even executives at Skoda blush, but the cars were durable and carved a niche among the car buyers who believed economical transport was more important than image.

Owners needed to be as durable as the cars to cope with their noise, discomfort and early unreliability.

The cars were miraculously outdated, a testimony to management with the vision of an ostrich and the investment power of a tramp — which is why they cannot be sold here any longer. Inchcape, the importer, has not been able to import any new models from Tolyatti, Lada's factory, for six months since the cars failed updated European Community emission tests.

The cantankerous, four-cylinder saloons and hatchbacks were too dirty to be sold in environmentally conscious European markets.

Yet Ladas had created their own small place in British motoring history, and a car that sold at the rate of around 14,500 a year cannot be dismissed merely as a joke.

An estimated 118,000 Ladas are still on Britain's roads, testimony to the model's durability if not its quality. Even though the marque had the worst reputation for reliability, scoring bottom of J. D. Power/*Top Gear* survey recently, it was also one of the first to offer a three-year/60,000 mile warranty.

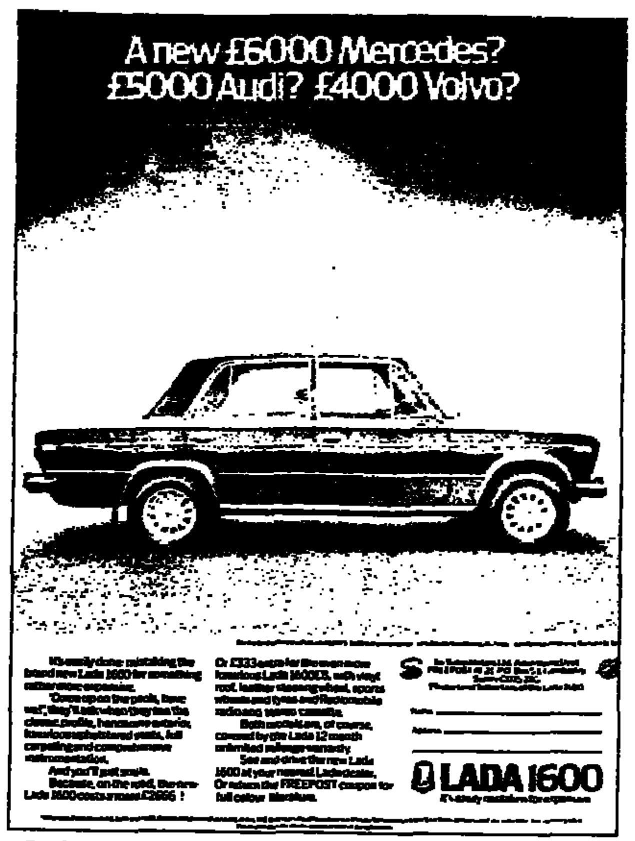
Simple three-box bodies were built from heavier gauge metal than that used in typical European cars, because that was the only steel Russia's mills could provide and Avtovaz, Lada's outdated manufacturing company, could work with.

But the cars last and last, they just get on with it come hail, rain or snow. "In Russia, we do not always have roads. Often we just have general directions in which we drive," As Vladimir Kaddanikov, a director of Avtovaz, put it.

David Bray, sales and marketing director of Motor Vehicle Imports, the Inchcape subsidiary which brought the cars into this country, says, "There are people who really do just want to get from A to B in their cars, who are not interested in the frills of motoring. The cars were good business and always had their place so we are very sad that the factory just can't supply us any more."

Popular belief says that Ladas were for losers, but careers and fortunes were built on the business.

> 'Owners need to be just as durable as their cars to cope'



A new £6000 Mercedes? £5000 Audi? £4000 Volvo?

LADA 1600

Lada's basement prices made buyers extremely wary

Cars like the Samara look as if they're out of the Ark

Mike Holt started as a car dealer with a Lada franchise in Bolton, Lancashire; now he has three dealerships in Bolton, Blackburn and the Isle of Man, plus another four dealerships with other manufacturers. His garages are among 90 still in business and supplying parts and maintenance to existing owners.

"Without Lada, I could not have moved into other dealerships and be where I am now," says Holt.

But buyers were always going to regard any car which sold for £3,995 with suspicion because it seemed a deal too good to be true. When Lada executives hit on the idea a year ago of giving away a free mountain bike — worth £7,000 — with every new car, the instant reaction was that the company should give away a car with every mountain bike.

A taxi driver in the posh resort of Hove, East Sussex, was banned because he drove a Lada and, inevitably, the hapless star of BBC's *Driving School* series — 55-year-old cleaner Maureen Rees from Cardiff — was learning in the family Lada.

For Lada was always the butt of the joke. Why does a Lada have a heated windscreen? So you can warm your hands as you push it. What do you call a Lada convertible? A skip. We have heard them all before but now the jokes are over and there will be no more new Ladas on Britain's streets.

I've seen the future, and there isn't one: Russia's sad state

Kevin Eason sees Lada back in the USSR

Raven-haired, luscious-lipped, curvaceous... and they were just the assembly line workers.

I walked the assembly lines of the Lada factory plant in Tolyatti, 600 miles from Moscow, on a short journey into a time warp. Row upon row of cars on one of the longest assembly lines I have ever seen were piled up — yet barely moving as workers sat around chatting.

Stranger still to Western eyes used to watching men working at a furious pace in factories such as Nissan's plant at Washington, Tyne and Wear, or the Longbridge factory in Birmingham belonging to Rover, the bulk of the assembly work seemed to be done by young women.

They might have dressed in overalls but their faces looked ready for a night on the dance floor, their rouge and scarlet lipstick glowing under the dingy strip lights of the factory, their hair piled high into the sort of beehive that made Dusty Springfield famous. The average age could have been no more than 19 or 20. While they struggled with dashboards and exhausts, the men sat bored, playing backgammon.

The frantic world of competition simply passed Lada by. The Tolyatti factory opened in 1966, a monument to the monolithic Communist ethic of controlled production, but which was to make a version of the Fiat 124. But nothing changed and by 1989, Lada had been left behind.

To say the Tolyatti visit was educational would be an understatement. Assembly shops were dark and messy, redolent of a Victorian sweatshop — if anybody had been sweating. Lines of rusting bodies greeted us at the door before making their painfully slow progress through the huge factory.

The high-speed testing bowl had more craters than Mars. At one point, while a screaming Lada Riva was pounding around the circuit, an old woman jumped over the barrier to make her way for her shift at the factory.

While Britain was adopting revolutionary change on the factory floor, the Russians of Tolyatti were still screwing together basic cars for the common man.

This has left the factory with mounting debts — up to £1.25 billion by the end of last year — and a range of models as up to date as Bill Haley's *Rock Around the Clock*. General Motors, Honda and Daewoo all looked at the Tolyatti plant with the idea of providing help or investment — and walked away.

Ladas will still be on sale in the old Soviet bloc, but modern Europe is now out of bounds. Tolyatti would need hundreds of millions of pounds of investment to turn it into a modern, vibrant car plant. Its workers would need a culture transplant.

Women workers do all the graft on the production lines

Men are gainfully employed playing backgammon

WORLD SUPERBIKE SERIES AT BRANDS HATCH

Home hopes and fellow Yorkshiremen: Carl Fogarty of the Ducati team, left, and Suzuki's James Whitham

Carl's a last-chance hero

John Naish talks to a Briton who still could become world champ

British sports fans growing accustomed to watching their heroes flop could be in for a shock at Brands Hatch next fortnight, where Briton Carl Fogarty is tipped to win at European round of the Superbike World Championship, *writes John Naish.*

With Tim Henman and Greg Rusedski collapsing at Wimbledon, Damon Hill trailing the Formula One car championship, and things looking grim for the England cricket team, the nation is short of heroes. Fogarty could be our best bet.

He is currently leading the superbike series, which hits the half-way mark at Laguna Seca, in America, tomorrow. And Brands is considered one of his best tracks — he won both superbike races there in 1995 on a Ducati, when he last lifted the World Championship crown.

The Brands Hatch meeting, on August 1-3, provides home race fans with a second chance to see superbike racing this year. While the British round was held at Donington in April, the Brands Hatch event is the European round. This was intended to have been held in Eastern Europe, but political instability prevented this, and the Kent circuit is considered the best alternative venue.

The Superbike World Championship has proved a hit with British racegoers because the bikes are based on the road machines that many fans ride themselves. But that's not to say that the racers are on stock machines — they're heavily modified, with strengthened frames, lightened chassis and tuned engines.

Motorcycle racing fans' interest in the series is greater this year, too, because the competition is close. All the factory-supported riders are still in with a shout. The other big motorcycling world series, the 500cc Grand Prix, has turned into something of a procession, however, with Michael Doohan now having nearly twice as many points as his nearest rival.

Fogarty had a poor season last year with Honda, but now is back with Ducati, and back in front. At each meeting, two races are held, and at the Donington meeting Fogarty came second in the first race, and first in the second.

With typical Yorkshire bluffness, however, Fogarty is sanguine about his chances. "Brands is one of my good tracks, but it's hard to predict because you never really know how it's going to go until you get there," he says. "I don't think that this year's Ducati is as good as the one I raced there two years ago. It's not been that easy to ride, and seems to run out in corners."

And how does he feel at being one of Britain's few remaining bright sporting prospects this year? "I'm still leading the championship, and I only race in order to win," he declares. "I've probably got more motivation than any other sportsman in Britain at the moment."

Rivals, too, are ready to praise Fogarty. While Chris Herring, of the British-run Castrol Honda team, says its riders, American John Kocinski and New Zealander Aaron Slight, will be his main challengers, "At Brands, Fogarty will take some beating, expecially with a huge crowd of around 65,000 cheering him on. After the British Formula One Grand Prix, this will be the best-attended motor sport event in Britain."

Honda will have its own ace up its sleeve, Herring says, as Brands Hatch comes just after Japan's Suzuka eight-hour race, which is so important to the home factories that they dedicate special teams to it. Once the race is over, Honda's leading-edge race equipment is made available to the superbike team: "It's like racing-spares Christmas," he says.

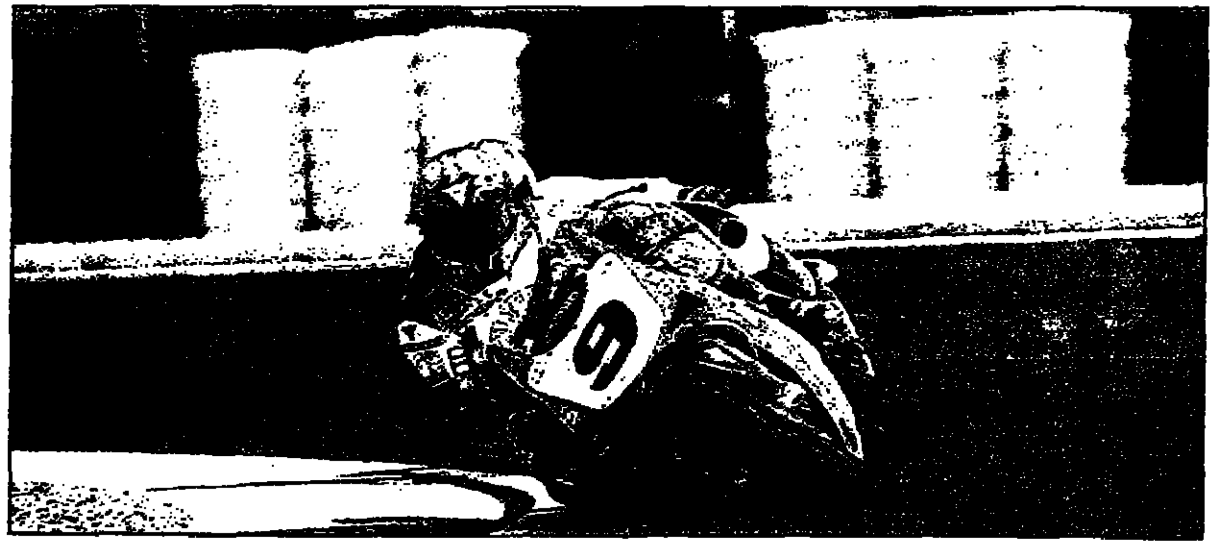
But Fogarty is not the only Yorkshireman in with a chance. James Whitham, riding for the British-run Suzuki team, secured two third places in the last two rounds — the team's first rostrum positions since its creation last year, when Witham returned to racing after a battle with Hodgkinson's disease. "Brands should be a good track for us," says a team spokesman. "There's that extra incentive when riding in front of the home crowd."

Championship leaders and points after five of 12 rounds: 1 Carl Fogarty (Ducati), 177; 2 John Kocinski, (Castrol Honda) 163; 3 Aaron Slight (Castrol Honda), 155; 4 Simon Crafar (Kawasaki), 113; 5 Pier-Francesco Chili (Ducati) 99.

AN EXCLUSIVE SPORTS OFFER THE TIMES

1997 World Superbike race day at Brands Hatch

Sunday 3 August



Last year 57,000 people packed Brands Hatch for the biggest Superbike event in the world. This year around 65,000 people are expected to turn out for this action-packed day, which is now the biggest motor sport event in the country after the Formula One Grand Prix. With three world-class British contenders, Carl Fogarty, who took the World Superbike crown in 1994 and 1995, Fogarty's Ducati team-mate, Neil Hodgson, a rising British star on the Superbike circuit, and Jamie Whitham, who came second in the 1996 British series, this is guaranteed to be an exciting event.

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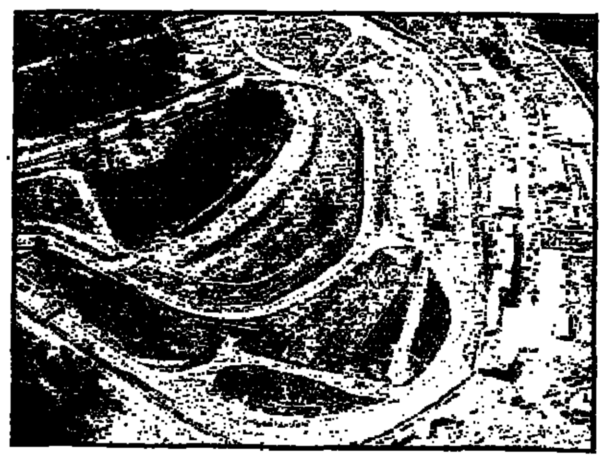

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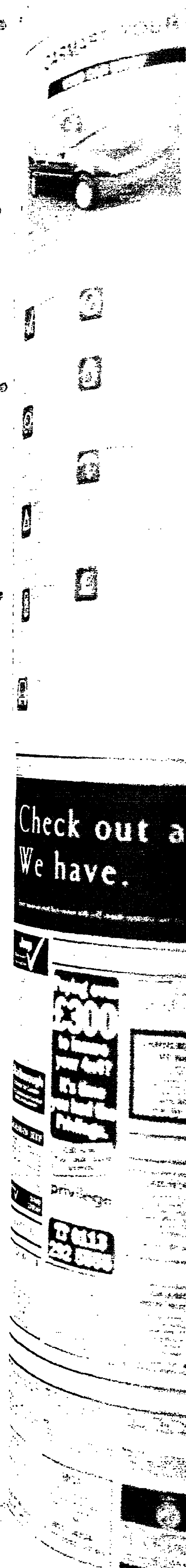

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CARMART: YOUR GUIDE TO WHAT'S NEW, AND WHAT'S USED, ON THE FORECOURTS

USED CAR BRIEF

VAUXHALL CAVALIER DIESEL

The Cavalier arrived in showrooms in 1988 and was replaced by the Vectra in 1995. It earned its spurs as a workhorse among company car fleets. Available as a four-door saloon and five-door hatch, but not as an estate. The 1.7-litre normally-aspirated diesel, and turbocharged diesel which uses an Isuzu engine, offer reliable and frugal alternatives to the petrol cars.

GOOD NEWS: The diesel Cavalier makes an excellent value-for-money argument. The extensive Vauxhall dealership chain means the car is easy to maintain, and parts are cheap, as are service costs. Nine times out of ten a Cavalier will offer dependable motoring, with economy of around 45mpg.

LOOK FOR: Power steering is a must on diesel-engined cars which are heavier at the front, so seek out post-1991 cars with power steering as standard. Of the two 1.7-litre diesel engines, the Turbo is the one to go for. Bright colours such as red, or metallic, will help when you come to resell the car.

SAFETY: The Cavalier is rated as average for safety by the Department of Transport, alongside the Toyota Carina and Mazda 626, better than the Rover Montego and Ford Sierra, but behind the class-leading Honda Accord and BMW 3-Series.

REPLACEMENT PARTS (prices including VAT from *Glassmatix 01932 823823*): Clutch assembly £273; full exhaust £265; rear dampers £30; front brake pads (axle set) £48; alternator £291 (exchange); starter motor £311 (exchange); radiator £155.

BAD NEWS: Watch out for problems with the engine, including blown head gaskets, as well as oil and water leaks, reportedly the most common faults with the Cavalier.

AVOID: Check the steering is precise and responsive and that the car does not pull to one side, as steering rack faults are a common Cavalier problem. Front disc brakes also wear and need to be checked, and ensure there are no alternator and starter motor problems.

INSURANCE: Cover from *AA Insurance (0800 444777)* on a 1993 Envoy 1.7-litre diesel costs a 55-year-old professional, male or female, with full no claims bonus living in Winchester, £154 a year fully comprehensive. A 22-year-old male, living in South London, with one-year no claims pays £630 a year fully comprehensive. A similar 22-year-old female pays £546.

PRICES: Expect to pay around £2,500 for a 1988 F-reg 1.7 L diesel four-door; £4,500 for a 1992 J-reg 1.7 L diesel; £4,200 for a 1991 J-reg 1.7 L diesel five-door hatch; £4,800 for a 1992 J-reg 1.7 L turbodiesel four-door, £6,500 for a 1992 K-reg 1.7 CD turbodiesel four-door and £12,000 for a 1995 N-reg CDX turbodiesel five-door hatch.

OVERALL: The classic complaint about diesels is that they are sluggish. The 1.7-litre turbodiesel Cavalier will reach close to 110mph and cover 0-60mph in under 13 seconds, so that argument is neatly countered. Capable, reliable, if slightly dowdy, the diesel Cavalier, especially the Turbo, is a sound option for motorists likely to do high mileages.

Seat of posing power

ROADTEST

You could become paranoid driving this car. Everywhere you go, people stare. At traffic lights in town, pedestrians and other drivers gaze remorselessly: in quiet country lanes, villagers gawp as you pass by.

At first, you think something must be wrong — jacket trapped in the door or headlights switched on at midday, *Eve-Ann Prentice writes.*

Eventually it dawns that Seat's 2-litre 16V Ibiza GTi is a show-off, just like its cousin, the rally-champion Ibiza Kit Car. It has the sort of cock-a-hoop style that made even rich kids in a BMW convertible turn their heads.

I decided to let it loose in poseur's paradise and took a mooch round London's Covent Garden on a rare fine evening. Even there, the Ibiza drew envious glances.

With Seat currently defending its F2 world rally championship title, the Ibiza range has helped the company reach new heights in sales in Britain; after a record year in 1996, sales in the first four months of this year were already 11 per cent higher than the same period last year.

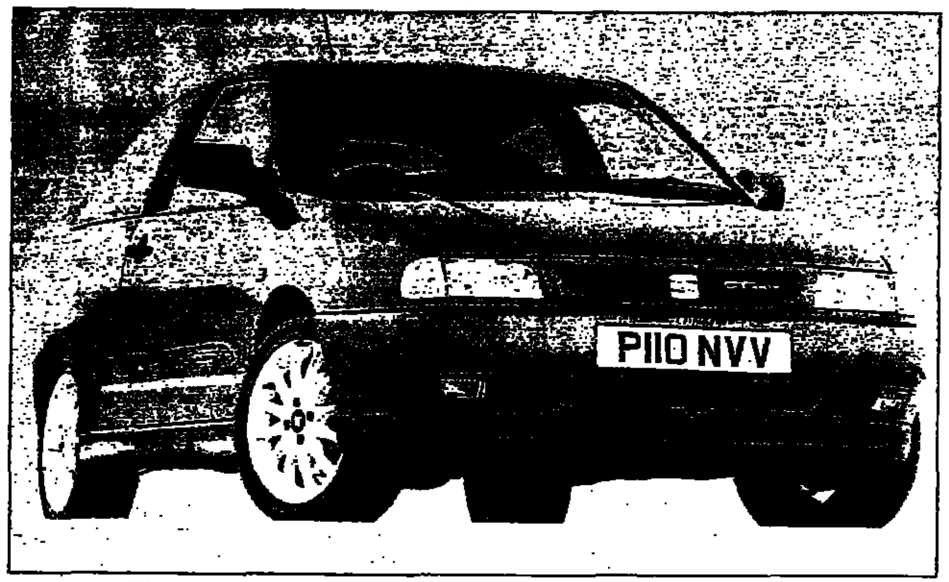
There are five models in the Ibiza 2-litre GTi range, ranging from £11,595 for the 8V Cupra Sport to £15,995 for the 16V with Recaro seats. All are hot and sticky — hot hatches that stick to the road. The £15,600 version that I drove was supremely comfortable on long drives, wonderfully manoeuvrable in town and exhilarating on the open road, with its 150 horsepower able to punch the car from 0-62mph in 7.9 seconds and on to a top speed of 134mph.

Because this car is so lively it does, however, suffer mildly from torque steer, where the front wheels struggle to find grip successfully as the throttle hits the floor.

One quibble is that the designers have taken Tony Blair's exhortations for motorists to lead greener, healthier lifestyles a little too much to heart. It is impossible to open the ash tray and engage first gear simultaneously, since the gear lever rams into the ashtray. Similarly, it is impossible to change from first to second with the ashtray exposed, and fifth blocks access to the cigarette lighter, so presumably the idea is to discourage smoker-drivers.

Nonetheless, the interior is remarkably roomy for a car just 3.8 metres long, and the boot easily coped with luggage that similar-sized cars have found hard to swallow.

And an intriguing digital display on the dashboard can be programmed to display average speed, fuel consumption and mileage — a sobering reminder of how driving carefully dramatically reduces fuel costs, although this is a beautifully economical hot-hatch.



Strong-selling Ibiza GTi's looks attract stares in town, country and Covent Garden

SEAT IBIZA 2.0 GTI 16V

Engine: Four-cylinder, 150bhp, 1984cc.
Performance: 0-62mph, 7.9 secs, max speed, 134mph.
Economy: 23.7mpg urban, 44.1mpg extra-urban.
Equipment: Air conditioning, ABS, traction control.
Price: £15,600.

Small reservations with used Cherokees

FORECOURT

■ BIG, LOUD and gleaming, the Americans have arrived, and none states its case louder than the Chrysler Jeep Cherokee.

The 4-litre Ltd Cherokee off-roader has been consistently popular since its launch, and the two top-of-the-range models, the Ltd Leather and the Ltd SE (Special Equipment) have been the real volume sellers, *Vaughan Freeman writes.*

The Cherokee has carved a niche for itself as a four-wheel-drive machine that also succeeds as a powerful status symbol, reports *CAP Black Book.*

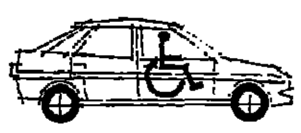
Standard equipment on the Ltd range is good, and for top models it is excellent: it includes leather seats, air conditioning, wood trim, alloy wheels and a six-speaker radio-cassette player.

The Cherokee is not as cumbersome as its competitors, but the drawback is that it offers limited luggage room.

Second-hand prices for the Cherokee, once strong, have slipped badly in recent months. Best buy is the 1994 4-litre Ltd with leather upholstery. Expect to pay around £14,000 for one with 50,000 miles on the clock.

SPARE PARTS

AA's disability action



■ THE AA is to help disabled people by developing a multi-lingual card for disabled people travelling to other EU countries, *Eve-Ann Prentice writes.*

The aim is to bypass the problem of running up against police and parking officials abroad who do not understand that the Orange Badge scheme entitles visiting disabled drivers to the same concessions as locals.

More than six million people in Britain have a disability that makes it difficult or impossible to use public transport, and most say they would be housebound if they could not use their cars.

The new card is one of a range of services for disabled people that will be exhibited at the Mobility Roadshow in Berkshire this weekend. The show, the world's biggest motoring event for disabled people, is open until tomorrow at the Transport Research Laboratory, Crowthorne.

Over 60,000 visitors are expected to attend the show, where more than 200 vehicles adapted for disabled people will be on display. Entrance to the show is free.

Visitors will also be able to get information about a new get-you-home service for users of electric wheelchairs and pavement vehicles. AA Mobility Assistance, the first service of its kind in the UK, has been developed in collaboration with Tripscope, a charity specialising in travel advice for the disabled.

New powerplant for 911

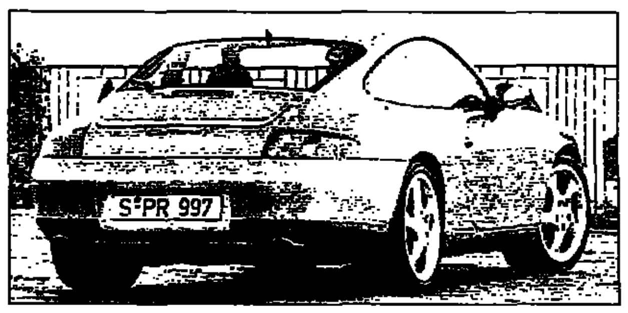
■ IT MAY look the same and sound the same. But the new Porsche 911 has a different beast in the engine bay.

The revamped 911, to be launched in September, has been completely redesigned for the first time in its 34-year history. The big difference is that the new 911 comes with a water-cooled flat-six engine, ending the era of its air-cooled predecessors.

The characteristic Porsche engine sound stays unchanged in the new model, which will be launched at the Frankfurt Motor Show in September. With the emphasis on ever-greener driving, prospective buyers will be pleased to learn that this car is quieter and cleaner than its forebears. This is despite an increase in power output to 300bhp.

The new six-speed manual transmission is more compact and lighter, despite adaptation to the higher power, and the Tiptronic S automatic transmission now has five speeds.

The car will punch from 0-60 in five seconds, and has a top speed of 180mph.



First major revamp gives Porsche water-cooled motor

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Russell Hayes tries out a powerful BMW-powered toy now on sale at a London emporium for spies

Three-wheeler from the Bond bug shop

What's it to be: a bullet-proof vest, an underwater scooter or a three-wheeled car? London's Spymaster store, famous for its off-the-peg espionage equipment, is branching out into the motor business by stocking the Scorpion, a 130mph rocket-sled powered by a BMW motorbike engine.

"We just looked at it and thought it was state-of-the-art, so we should sell it," says director Jeremy Marks. And so the Scorpion can now be ordered from the Park Lane emporium and delivered within six weeks, from £24,500 on the road.

It is made by Grinnal cars in Worcestershire and can be bought as a kit or fully built to Spymaster spec to drive away.

In truth the Scorpion is more motorbike than car. Remove the fibreglass and Kevlar bodywork and you find a BMW superbike lurking underneath, with a two-person tub located where the handlebars should be.

The 1100cc four-cylinder engine transmits 90bhp to the rear wheel. This is adequate for a family saloon, but akin to jet propulsion for a three-wheeler that weighs around 400kg.

The engine begs to be revved up to its limit of nearly 9,000rpm, and in standard form will accelerate you from standing to 60mph in a claimed five seconds. "Does it shift?" asked a man in a Mercedes on London's Euston road.

"As fast as that," said my passenger, Renzo, Spymaster's demonstration driver, pointing at the exhaust pipe of the Porsche 928 in front. If this isn't enough, then exhaust and engine modifications can boost power to 130bhp.

But does it fall over round bends? How dare you. Unlike certain other three-wheelers, this has a pair of wheels at the front, rather than the back and there's virtually no sensation of body roll at all.

The Scorpion is a small but sophisticated little beast, with a spaceframe chassis, aluminium wheels and wishbone suspension at the front.

There is a conventional clutch pedal but the gearchange is sequential, motorcycle-style, so that each forward movement of the gearlever selects another ratio. The gear position is indicated by a digital display.

BMW approves this use of its engine, and the Scorpion can be serviced at any BMW bike dealer. Thrift will not be a priority for the buyer but it qualifies for motorcycle road-tax rates and can be insured as a 1.1-litre car.

You don't have to take a motorcycle test to drive it, and if you are worried about safety in such a sparse, low-slung machine, it meets German TUV crash standards as far as they go for this type of car.

There are no airbags or anti-lock brakes fitted, but hefty discs front and rear stop the Scorpion well.

Down in the cockpit the pedals were wheeled up to meet the reach of my legs and the racing harness pulled tight enough for me not to move. It is not unlike sitting low down in an undersized bathtub. Rear bumpers were on my eye level.

Flashguns went off from tourist buses and pedestrians stopped and smiled. Even one of London's hard-driving couriers found time to stop and tell us he thought it was "wicked".

Clunk the gearlever back once for first gear, give the engine a decent amount of revs and you're off: fishtailing up the road unless you pay the rear-wheel-drive Scorpion some respect.

Given the amount of interest we created, I kept a lowish profile until we were out of London on the A40. Every high wall (and most of them seemed very high) was a chance to bounce off that fabulous BMW thrum. In any gear the engine pull is terrific.

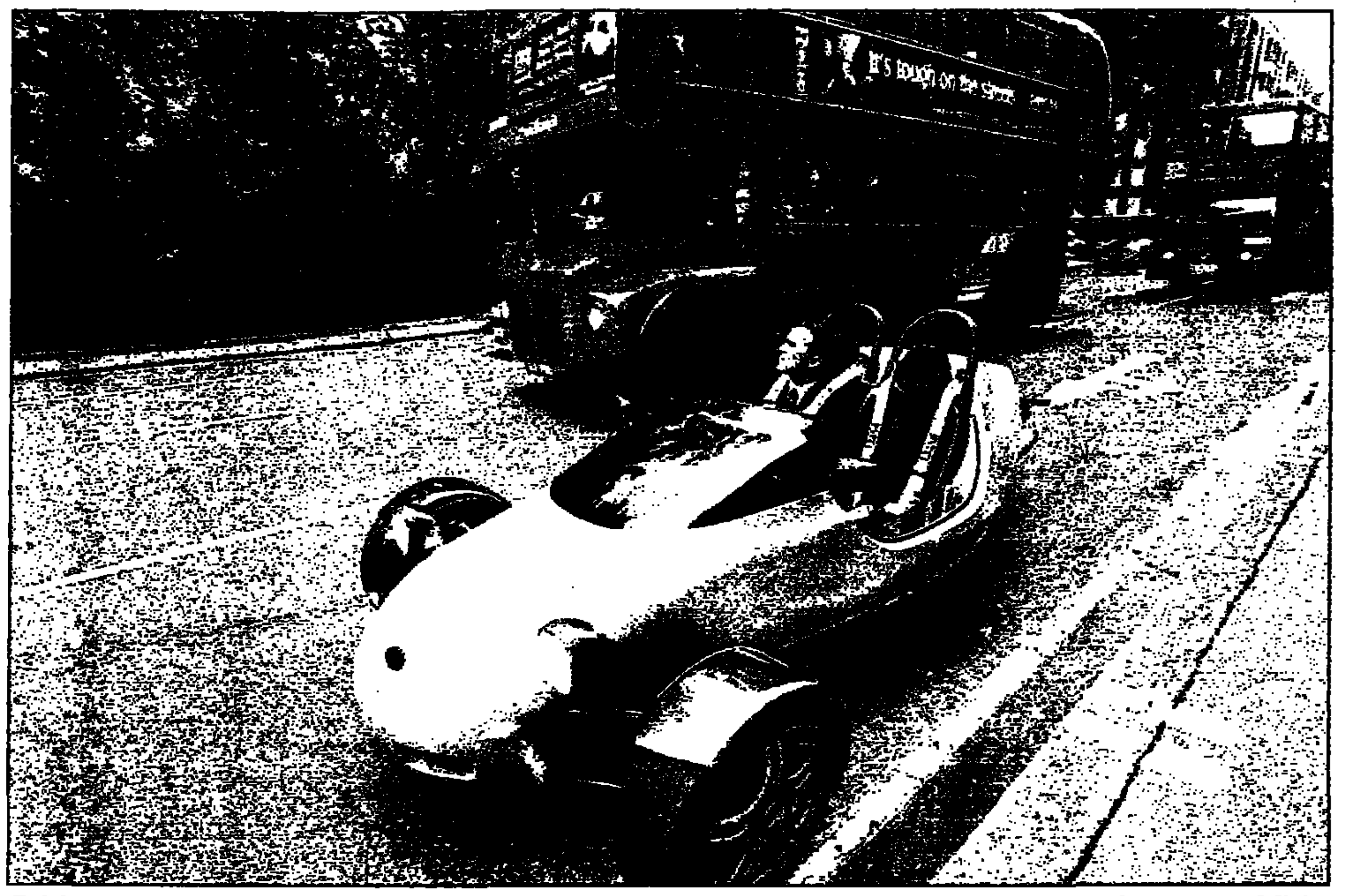
You don't have to wear crash helmets and there isn't a radio, but it was huge fun provided you went fast enough to let the rain shoot over the top.

Viewed in motorcycling terms however, the Scorpion constitutes a soft option, with its passenger space, room for a weekend bag above the engine and gusts of warm air from the front-mounted radiator.

The Scorpion is the nearest Spymaster gets to a gadget for the hell of it. It has just taken on armour-plated cars for its "foreign and government clients" and is an agent for the awesome Hummer military transport. There is a purpose to everything it sells, however odd.

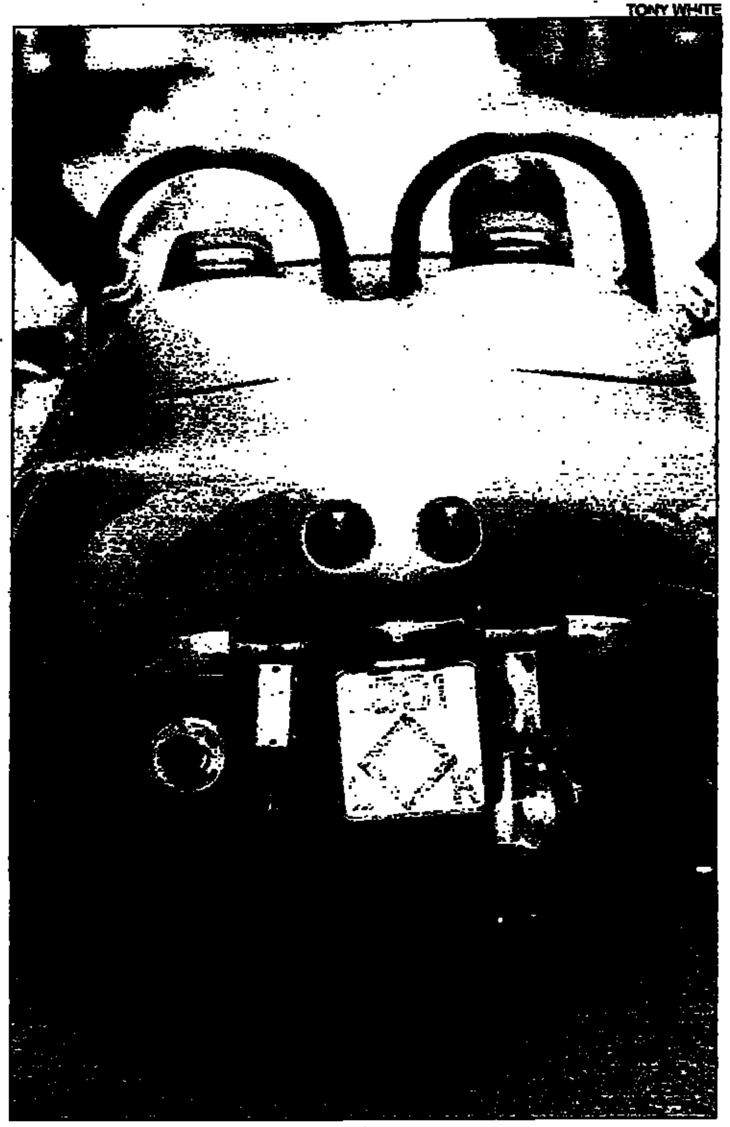
For example, BOB, the £14,000 breathing observation bubble, may look like it's an underwater scooter from the puppet-series *Stingray*, but is currently being used by harbours to inspect the underside of ships.

Sadly for the Scorpion it is unlikely to appeal to just the sort of driver with £24,500 to burn, Middle Eastern car fanatics. "Apparently a convertible just gets too hot and you can't fit air conditioning," says Jeremy.



Driving at exhaust-level down clogged city roads does not show the Scorpion at its best, though the car is an urban poseur's delight

TONY WHITE



Rear wheel gets skittery, but the configuration gives fine handling

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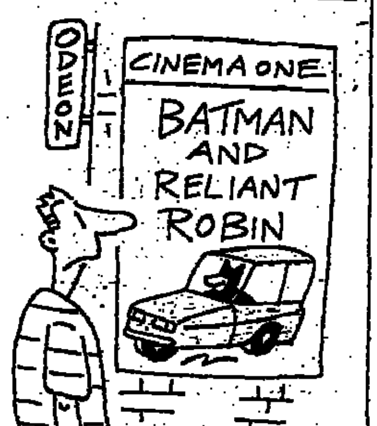

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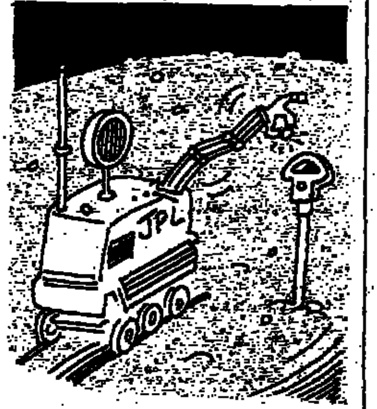

Our driving competition reached its climax to the sound of Formula One engines, says **Kevin Eason**

Quality not quantity for winner Stephen

Rigorous competition tests included driving the special skid car

PETER TRIEVNOR

Winner Stephen Robson said that he did little business driving, but added: "I knew I had performed well. I didn't get flustered"

THE TIMES
Lease Plan
Company Car Driver 1997

For a man who confesses not to drive very much on business, Stephen Robson is a whizz. For the man from Lancashire is this year's winner of *The Times*/Lease Plan Company Car Driver of the Year competition.

And nobody was more surprised than Stephen when the results were announced at the event's gala dinner at Sedgebrook Hall in Northamptonshire after the tense final day's competition on the famous race track at Silverstone, home of this weekend's British Grand Prix.

Examiners from the Silverstone Driving Centre reckoned this year's batch of 12 finalists, including three women, the best in the four years of the competition so far. Stephen was the pick of the bunch.

"I simply couldn't believe it," said the depot manager from Featherstone. "I knew I had performed well. I felt my driving was smooth and I didn't get flustered."

The final was the culmination of nearly three months of searching for Britain's top company motorist. More than 100 companies and 300 motorists — from sales reps to vets — entered what has become the nation's best contest for company car drivers. At stake was a top prize provided by Lease Plan, one of Europe's top vehicle leasing companies.

We took drivers to six regional locations where they were tested on every facet of the driving skills they need daily in their jobs as company car drivers.

Chris Howell, managing director of Drive Tech, one of the country's top driver training schools, says: "Our examiners were fascinated to see how standards seem to be improving each year.

"Company drivers have become aware that driving is not just a matter of staying out of accidents and avoiding dents that cost their companies money. It is also a matter of pride in their own abilities.

The final distilled those skills learnt at the regional events into an intensive eight-hour day with the stakes raised to include high-speed work on the Silverstone circuit.

As the company car drivers tackled lane changes at up to 70mph on the inner circuit, Damon Hill screamed around the grand prix track in his Arrows Formula One car. Formula One teams had chosen the same day for tyre testing before this weekend's grand prix.

Before the prize presentations, Vahid Daemi, Lease Plan's managing director, told the finalists they were leading a surge of interest in safety and driving skills which would benefit industry — and the motorists themselves.

But the night belonged to Stephen Robson, who joins an elite band who can claim to be the best at the wheel in British industry.

COMPETITION RESULTS

Winner, Stephen Robson, Linpac Plastics; 2, Jonathan Popple, Denplan; 3, April Carrington, Hitachi Credit. Runners-up: Nick Williams-Howes, Equifax Europe (UK); Dave Cobb, A. Baldwin & Co Ltd; Chris Hollands, Permabond; Averil Compton, Bookham Technology Ltd; Gail Summers, ITNET Ltd; Stuart Lawrence, John German; Gary Slade, Sitel Corporation; Nick Lander, PAV Fluid Handling; Graham Edwards, National Starch & Chemical.

Safe drivers all — competition finalists at the Silverstone circuit

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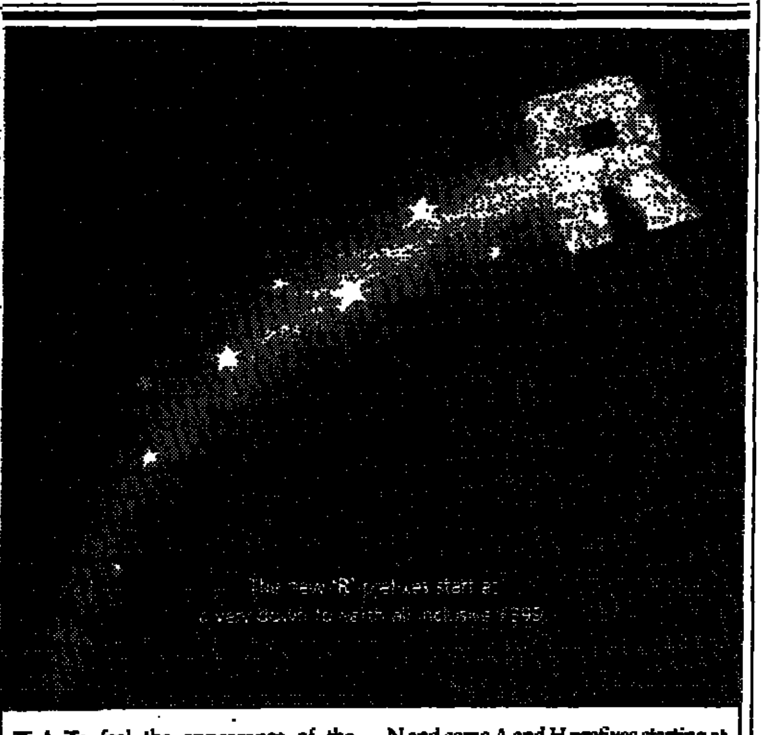
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Richard Bremner on the powerful new Quattroporte — the Latin firm's latest attempt to leave its troubled past behind

Big saloon looks almost dull at first, but this belies the striking Maserati grille, subtleties like the rear bodywork and the tidiness of its proportions. Interior is sheer Italian opulence, with room for four adults to sprawl comfortably

Maserati without the unreliability

One does not think of Italy as a producer of opulent cars. Fast, yes — Ferrari and Lamborghini are testament to that — and small and economical too, but if it's a super luxury saloon that you're after, it's Germany and Britain that usually supply the goods.

But one Italian saloon, a Maserati, no less, provides a tempting and decidedly individual alternative. The Quattroporte — it means, rather unromantically, four doors — has been around for a couple of years, and a few have crept on to British roads, powered by a potent turbocharged V6. But now a new version, propelled by a twin-turbo V8, has arrived with a stack of improvements that have been paid for with Fiat money.

Unlike Jaguar, Mercedes or BMW saloons, the Maserati is produced in tiny numbers. So if nothing else, you're guaranteed exclusivity for your £57,995. The V6, still available, is yours for £49,995. What you're also promised, now Fiat's quality-control engineers have combed through it, is a car of higher quality.

Much needed, you'd think, if you'd driven one of the early V6s, which suffered fit, finish and electrical problems that you wouldn't expect in a £15,000 car, let alone a £50,000 one. Maserati has often got away with a gambler's approach to quality control because their buyers have tended to see such foibles as character.

But these days, few people view a two-hour wait on the hard shoulder for the recovery truck as an amusing eccentricity. Fiat beefed up up the body shell to banish the rattles and squeaks that subtly flexing bodywork can generate, and redesigned the rear doors to improve their fit.

Electrical equipment and interior trim have also been worked over, and the car seems more tightly assembled and better detailed. There's still a way to go — the holes let into the dashboard's wood trim for the air vents look like they were cut by inebriates, and the swivelling map-reading light was frozen in its socket in the car I tried. Mercedes quality engineers are not going to lose sleep over this Latin rival.

But such practical considerations are far from your mind when you first confront the Quattroporte. A big conventional saloon, it strikes you as almost dull at first, but in time its appeal grows. The Maserati grille is striking, and subtleties like the shape of the bodywork over the rear wheels, the quadruple exhausts and the tidiness of its proportions appeal.

It's the Quattroporte's interior that delivers the real impact, however. This is latin lavish at its best, even if it does stray toward the vulgar in places. It's roomy too — four full-size adults can happily sprawl. Air conditioning, electrically adjustable seats and an ambitious stereo are all there, as you'd expect, but what the keen might also notice is the six-speed manual transmission. There's a four-speed automatic option available too, but the six-speeder hints at the Maserati's decidedly sporty, character.

A V8 sounds promising for motive power, but when you discover that it has twin turbochargers, twin intercoolers and spits out 335bhp, you realise that the Modenese engineers aren't messing about — this car can explode to 60mph in under 5.8 seconds, and top speed is an astonishing 168mph.

Such is the docility and quietness of the engine that such possibilities seem outlandish at first; the V8 is no more than brisk if you're gentle with accelerator and don't rev it. But allow the rev-counter needle to climb past 3500rpm and the Maserati simply bounds forward — and keeps on bounding as you take each gear — even sixth. It doesn't take long to realise that you're sitting in a four-door supercar. It all happens so smoothly too, the V8's hum hardens to no more than a silken beat when it's worked hard.

Unfortunately the car is less than silken on undulating roads. It is just too big and heavy for the suspension to keep it fully under control. Despite its electronically adjustable shock absorbers, the thing starts to heave about like a dinghy in a swell. Pleasingly precise steering compensates to a degree, as, on dry roads, does the generous roadholding. In the wet, hard throttle-use makes the rear end slide sideways. Traction control ought to be standard on a car this expensive and this fast.

The Quattroporte is not really at the cutting edge of technology though, and for many, that will be part of its charm.

If buyers can overlook irritations like the badly positioned clutch pedal, the dated control layout and the slightly underdeveloped suspension, they will enjoy an astonishing performer of great character and exclusivity. Maserati plans on selling just 15 here this year. It should have no trouble.

MASERATI QUATTROPORTE V8

Engine: 3217cc, 335bhp, 32-valve eight cylinder.

Economy: Urban: 11.2mpg. Extra-urban: 25.2mpg. Combined: 17.0mpg.

Performance: 0-62mph, 5.8 seconds. Maximum speed 168mph.

Price: V8 six-speed manual, £57,995; four-speed automatic, £59,795.

Famous name set for Italian renaissance

On July 1, responsibility for Maserati's future passed from Fiat Auto to Ferrari Spa. This may sound like a trivial detail of industrial bureaucracy, but it bodes well for Maserati's future. Though owned by Fiat, Ferrari operates all but independently.

The two companies will not compete — Maserati fits beneath Ferrari in the pecking order — but Maserati will benefit from Ferrari's engineering skills.

Maserati emerged in 1926, and for more than 20 years, the Maserati brothers produced only racing cars. The zenith of its racing history came in 1957, when Juan Manuel Fangio won the grand prix world championship in the famous 250F. In the same year it almost won the sportscar championship too, but for a catastrophic last race in Venezuela that saw all four of its entries wiped out in just a few minutes.

The cost of this, and other financial troubles, ended Maserati's official racing programme, the company choosing instead to concentrate on its road cars.

In 1968, Maserati joined forces with Citröen and entered a prolific period, the two overseeing the birth of the Indy, Bora, Merak and Khamsin supercars. But the French firm's financial troubles, and the 1973 energy crisis, soon spelt trouble. Maserati was to have been liquidated had not Argentinian entrepreneur Allessandro de Tomaso stepped in with the Italian Government.

In 1982 Maserati launched the Biturbo, a compact two-door saloon powered by a turbocharged V6. The model re-established it as a maker of svelte, compact, rapid and sometimes spectacularly unreliable saloons. But the firm was stuck recycling the Biturbo under different names, as it was unable to generate enough money to fund genuinely new models.

Maserati was absorbed by industrial giant Fiat in 1994, which was able to fund the launch of the new Quattroporte, and the made-over version we test here, as well as a new coupé that will be unveiled next March.

Priced to sit between the most expensive Alfa GTVs (Fiat owns Alfa Romeo too) and the least expensive Ferraris, the new coupé is reported to be very handsome. It will be powered by the same V6 and V8 engines that are available in the Quattroporte.

AN EXCLUSIVE COMPETITION THE TIMES

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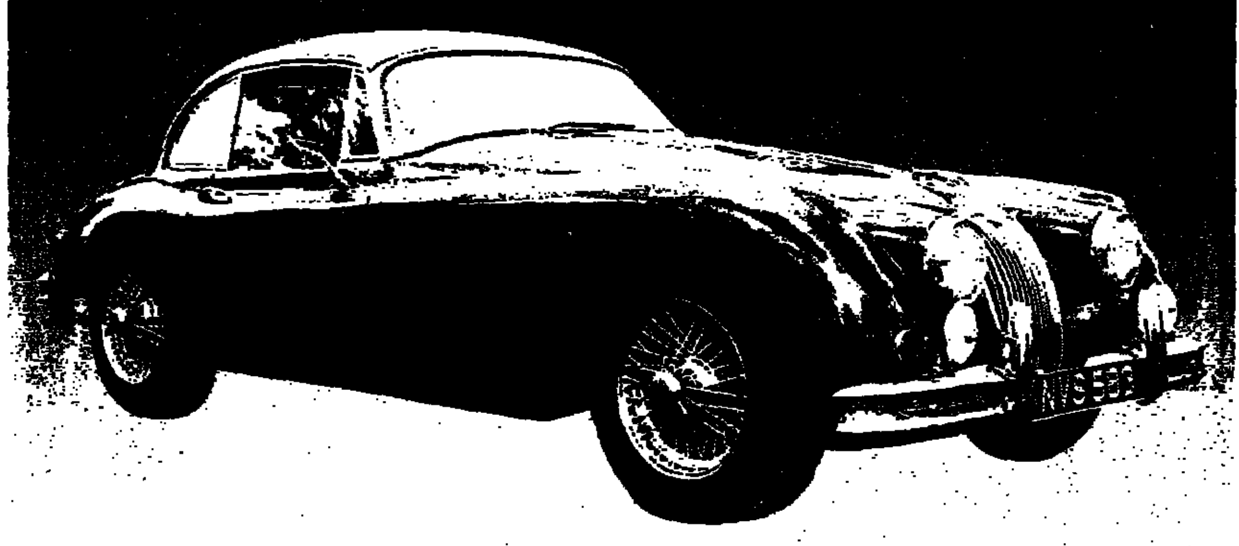

Today *The Times* gives you the chance to win a beautiful classic car, the Jaguar XK 150 coupé, pictured, in our exclusive competition. Just a glance is enough to understand why the British show such enthusiasm for classic cars. It is an instant head-turner. This distinct coupé has been mildly modified for the sporting driver. Finished in classic British racing green, retrimmed in tan leather, it has walnut veneer dashboard and a stainless steel sports exhaust (it sounds magnificent). Add to all that a high standard of restoration, a boot badge boasting Jaguar's five 1950s Le Mans wins, a manual close ratio gearbox, handsome chrome wire wheels and louvred bonnet and you have a car that will be the envy of everyone you know.

For your chance to win this legendary classic, call our competition hotline with your answer to this question:

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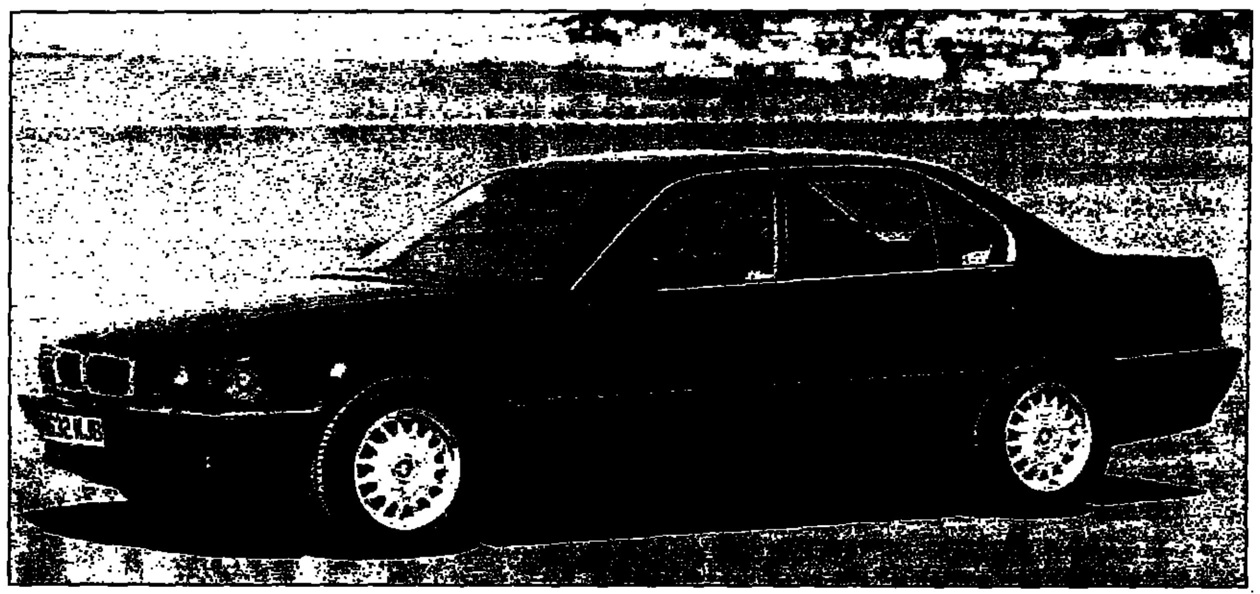
CHANGING TIMES



Extra half foot adds more than £7,000 to the on-the-road price of the 740iL, bringing it to an impressive £57,700

BMW adds six inches for the luxury-length limousine

Vaughan Freeman discovers why an ordinary 7-series is not enough

The L on the boot-lid badge of BMW's longest car tells you it is a smidgeon under 17ft long, with a price tag and a list of costly options to match its extravagant luxury-limousine dimensions.

The L is some half a foot longer than the base 7-series saloon, and it is a costly extra. Those extra six inches add more than £7,000 to the on-the-road price of the 740iL, bringing it to an impressive £57,700.

And that is without the £8,500 worth of extras that festooned our test car, which included £3,355 worth of satellite-linked navigation system, £1,200 alloy wheels, £840 hi-fi, and the £1,305 electronic damper control system. The result is a total asking price closer to £66,000.

It is a lot of money, but then it is a lot of car. The toys are impressive, such as weather-sensitive windscreen wipers that detect how much rain is falling and control the wiper's frequency and speed accordingly.

The buttons that decorate the dashboard and centre console should keep even the most inquisitive five-year-old busy for an afternoon. The true genius of the 740iL though, what makes it such a wafting, creamy, cossetting car to drive all day, every day, is its ride, and its eight-cylinder, 32-valve, 4.4-litre engine.

BMW's 7-series range is the biggest-selling eight-cylinder car in Europe. It is a reflection of the BMW engineering strategy that, for all the environmentally sound drift towards smaller cars with smaller engines, there is no substitute for litres. The V8 powerplant turns out 286bhp, which on paper means little. On the road it makes for an engine so irritatingly quiet that the only way to tell it is running is by looking at the rev counter.

On the move, motorway speeds are reached with the car barely warming to its task. During an 800-mile European jaunt, speeds far in excess of the UK speed limit could be legally maintained with absolutely no stress. The engine is matched to an automatic gearbox, which delivers that power responsively, and allows such a big car (it weighs close to two tons) to overtake safely without problems, managing from 50mph to 75mph in seven seconds.

Those who nevertheless yearn to use their left hand can switch instantaneously from fully automatic to the Steptronic transmission, which in effect offers manual selection without a clutch. But the engine offers so much torque that for most driving the "ordinary" automatic is more than adequate.

The huge seats in the front mean big distances are not a problem, while rear seat passengers have enough space for a five-a-side footie match.

In a world of anonymous motoring the 740iL is also entertaining. Sipping coffee at an *autoroute* stop south of Paris, a gaggle of Dutch schoolboys stopped to drool at the car, intrigued as much by the dashboard-mounted TV and navigation system, as by the car's length and opulence.

BMW launched its V8 engines in 1992, drastically uprated them in 1996, and close on 200,000 have been sold. Litle wonder. For those who perch high enough up the corporate ladder for the 740iL to be on their shopping list, it must make a sound value-for-money argument, despite the price tag.

BMW 740IL

Performance: Top speed electronically limited to 155mph, 0-60mph in 7 seconds.
Economy: 14.5mpg in town, 30.4mpg motorway driving, 21mpg overall.
Standard equipment: Air conditioning, driver, passenger and side airbags (mounted in doors), cruise control, remote central locking, electric windows all round with anti-trap, electrically operated headlight adjustment, leather upholstery, power steering, walnut wood trim, electronic immobiliser with passive arming, automatic stability control and traction to avoid wheelspin.
Price: £57,700 on the road, £66,000 as tested with optional equipment.

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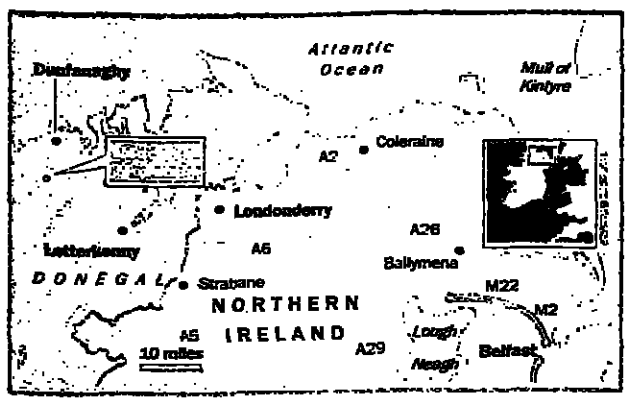
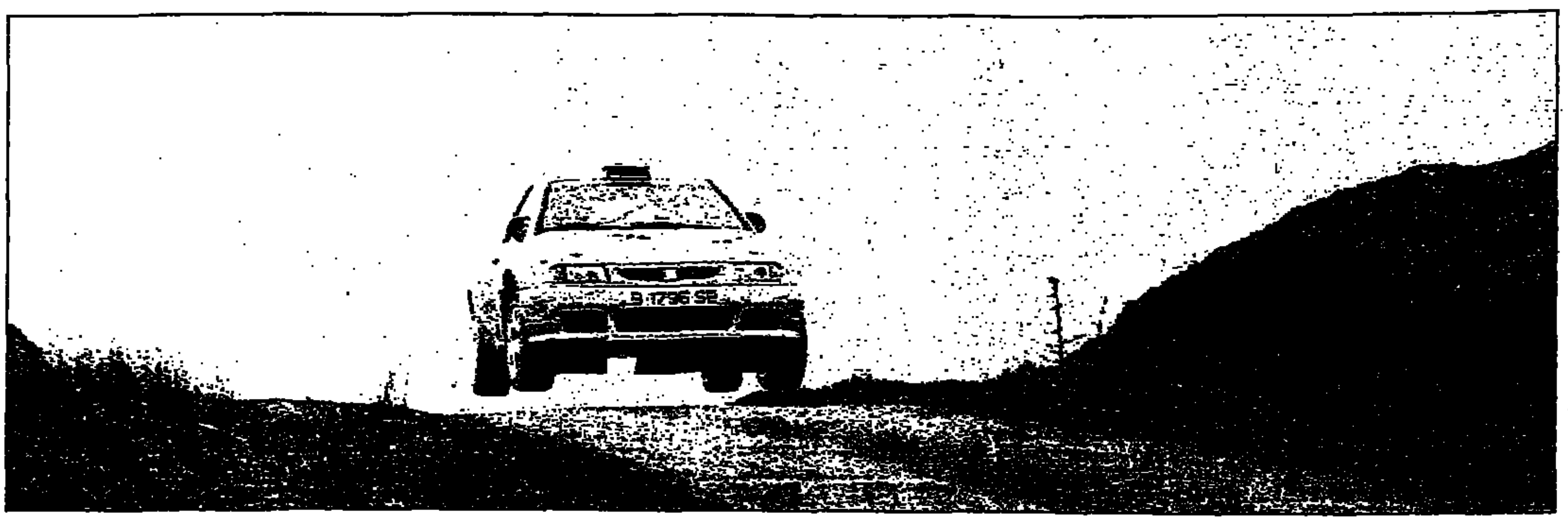


Eve-Ann Prentice joined Seat's test team in Donegal, but then got caught up in sectarian violence


Barbara Armstrong launches the Ibiza into space after careering over a ridge. The road was no wider than a dirt track and little better paved

Troubled tale of two Irish rallies

When Barbara Armstrong says, "This is dangerous", you believe her. Hurtling with the Seat works driver at up to 100mph on a bumpy road no wider than a donkey cart in the Donegal wilderness should provide enough excitement for anyone in one day.

So after going along for the ride as Seat pushed its rally cars to the limit, I settled down for what should have been a quiet, comfortable drive back to the airport. Except that the airport was in Belfast and we had to cross the breadth of Ulster on one of the most violent days of the Province's recent past.

As we passed through Londonderry, skirting charred cars and buses, never knowing whether the next bend in the road would be blocked by burning barricades, and sensing the palpable animosity of knots of angry young men, any fears about riding in Seat's rally cars paled into insignificance.

Seat press officer Lisa Dickson was in the driving seat for the return journey as we nervously edged past two burnt-out cars that all but blocked our path while morose youths stared from the shelter of a graffiti-scrawled wall. Her mobile telephone rang. It was her mother: all is well. Dickson assured her as we scraped through the barricade. Next day, back at her office in Milton Keynes, she admits her sleep that night had been plagued by nightmares.

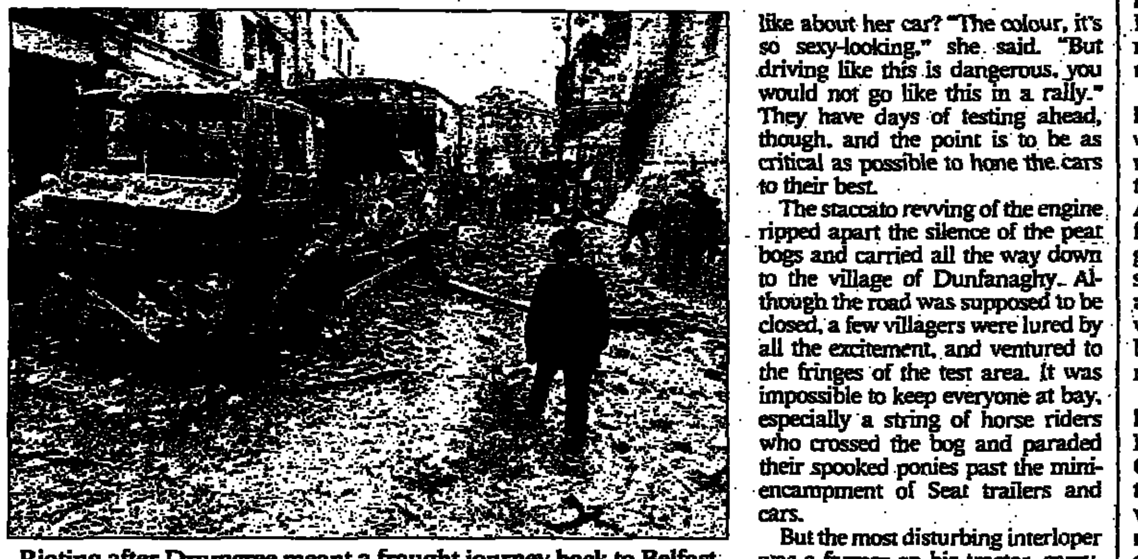
Eve-Ann Prentice remains smiling in the face of adversity

Muckish Mountain near Dunfanaghy in northern Donegal is a favourite testing ground for rally cars, and Seat, currently world rally championship leaders, seized the opportunity to put two of its Ibiza Kit cars through their paces there this week. The team took part in a rally it sponsored in North Armagh last weekend, and is due to take part in the Sligo Rally tomorrow.

The timing seemed perfect, except that it also coincided with a flashpoint in the Northern Ireland marching season. Violence flared across the province, just as the 14-strong Seat group set out for Donegal across the border in the Republic of Ireland.

Most of the Seat group made the journey from Belfast without incident last Sunday. In the evening, however, news of spreading violence coincided with a call from a photographer who could not get past burning barricades in Londonderry. The violence spread across the border, with stone-throwing and a spate of car hijackings in Letterkenny, just down the road from the Seat testing ground.

On Monday morning we set out for a mist-shrouded Muckish Mountain. A wicked little grin appeared on Barbara Armstrong's face as she launched the Seat Ibiza into space after careering to a ridge. The road, no wider than a dirt track and little better paved, raced to meet us in a blur reminiscent of the images on a motor racing computer game. Except in a computer game your stomach isn't left so far behind that it makes the big dipper at Blackpool seem like a kiddies' roundabout.


Rioting after Drumcree meant a fraught journey back to Belfast

The aim was to torture the two rally cars in an attempt to get steering, suspension and performance to a peak of near-perfection, especially since Armstrong's Ibiza had a new engine. She completed the Scottish Rally without a starter motor. This was only the third test session the Seat Cupra Sport rally team had held: "Renault is out all the time, all they do is test, test, test," says an engineer.

Armstrong is not taking part in the world championship, but is lying third in the women's class of the British championships, which continue with the Ulster Rally at the beginning of August. "She is seeing the red mist this morning," said one of the mechanics as she launched her first automobile long-jump record attempt of the day.

Armstrong was not happy with the set-up of the car, and tyres were changed, brakes tweaked and suspension twiddled before I was allowed on board. "This would not go straight on the M1," said a suspension expert who had gone for a ride with her.

"I would like it to be less sensitive," said Armstrong. "it is very, very sensitive; it's got a million miles to go yet." So what does she like about her car? "The colour, it's so sexy-looking," she said. "But driving like this is dangerous, you would not go like this in a rally." They have days of testing ahead, though, and the point is to be as critical as possible to hone the cars to their best.

The staccato revving of the engine ripped apart the silence of the peat bogs and carried all the way down to the village of Dunfanaghy. Although the road was supposed to be closed, a few villagers were lured by all the excitement, and ventured to the fringes of the test area. It was impossible to keep everyone at bay, especially a string of horse riders who crossed the bog and paraded their spooked ponies past the mini-encampment of Seat trailers and cars.

But the most disturbing interloper was a farmer on his tractor, carrying a child and two dogs as passengers, who trundled out of the mist and on to the rally test track into the path of the second Ibiza, being driven by Kenny McKinstry.

McKinstry's superlative reactions ensured a collision was avoided and the only casualty was the Tarmac, scarred by burning rubber.

The relief was minimal, however, compared with to the sense of security Dickson and I felt on reaching Belfast's airport terminal. The rest of the Seat team stayed in Donegal and we heard the alarming news on the radio that during our drive from Donegal, more than 200 cars had been hijacked.

IN BRIEF

■ HELLO and goodbye to the Spectre, Britain's latest forlorn attempt to build a supercar. The gorgeous, sleek model is set to star in a new Hollywood movie starring Jerry Hall — but the two celluloid Spectres might be the last sighted, for the manufacturer, based in Poole, Dorset and once backed by five-times Le Mans winner Derek Bell, was reported to have folded this week. Only 25 Spectres were sold in spite of its roaring performance and a price of £20,000 less than a Ferrari F355.

■ GOODBYE too to the hapless Ford Probe, which is being killed off. Made in the USA since 1994, the car failed to capture public imagination even though its pedigree and performance were as good as most models in the sector. Ford now believes that it will have the coupé sector sewn up instead with its new, little Puma and a forthcoming model based on the Mondeo's much-praised chassis.

■ MAZDA'S new 626 range will start at £13,960 on the road and top out at £17,960 for the plush 2.0SEi version. Available, for now, only as a five-door hatchback, the 626 gets air conditioning, power steering and electric windows all-round as standard in every version while better security brings a bonus with group ratings down from 14 to 8E.

■ AND YOU think your business has got problems? Chrysler in the United States this week recalled 876,200 vehicles — the biggest product recall in motor industry history. Chrysler brought back pick-ups, people-carriers including the Voyager, Jeep Cherokee and Wrangler models for a variety of reasons in seven different recalls.

■ ALEX "Rivers" Fletcher, 85, one of the oldest racing drivers in Britain, sold his 1934 Alvis Speed 20 tourer for £31,050 in a Sotheby's car auction at the RAF Museum, Hendon, north London. It was bought by Peter Thompson, who wants to race the car. His wife is the daughter of Arthur James, who founded the Alvis Owners Club.

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